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(Frontispiece.)—Frank had foreseen the danger.—P. 243.

THE
YOUNG MOUNTAINEER

OR

16
FRANK MILLER'S LOT IN LIFE.

The Story of a Swiss Boy.

BY DARYL HOLME.

WITH FIFTY-SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS.

WILLIAM P. NIMMO
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P R E F A C E.

THIS is a companion to *The Lost Father, or Cecilia's Triumph*. It is also a transference from the same French author. The writer in English has proceeded in the same way with the original in the present as he explained that he did in the former story. He has transferred the plan and the materials from the French, but he has adapted the build and the sentiments to his English readers. He has endeavoured to shape the features of the various characters more to an English idea of beauty than he found them with their peculiarly French looks. Mrs. St. Victor's patronising airs, as they were drawn by Mlle. Gouraud, would not be so pleasant to English young people as they seem to have been to that lady's many readers among the rising generation in her own country. The writer in English has also freely added details wherever he thought they would interest his readers.

The points of contrast between the two stories will be apparent to all readers. The former was about a girl :

this one is about a boy. She was rich, and became poor, and triumphed : he was poor, and became rich, and did not lose himself. Education in private was considered best for her : education at a public school was the only way to train him. These are only two or three of the many points of comparison and contrast which will be discovered by the reader as constituting the two stories companions.

The same pure tones of an earnest spiritual life are to be heard through this as through Mlle. Gouraud's other writings. The English author is anxious to assign to her all the credit of whatever merit the two little stories may possess. He has spent many a pleasant hour over them. A single misprint in the former preface may be corrected in this one. The French author is there called Madame Julie Gouraud ; it ought to be Mlle. Julie Gouraud. The mistake was in the French copy translated from. The information to correct it has been kindly supplied by the French publishers, L. Hachette and Co. The English author can only express a hope that many will share with him the pleasure he has so long enjoyed in fellowship with Mlle. Gouraud's pure and beautiful creations.



THE YOUNG MOUNTAINEER;

OR

FRANK MILLER'S LOT IN LIFE.

CHAPTER I.



HERE is a kind of beauty peculiar to a well-designed and tastefully coloured map. People associate ideas with countries, and their ideas are more like the map they are used to than the country they have never seen. The geographical ignorance which lessons in geography leave behind is a discovery made by travellers and tourists in every new place they visit, from their first run into strange lands to their latest leisure in a foreign hotel.

Switzerland is one of the countries which are not well imagined from the map. All the rivers always frozen ; the roads perpetually slippery ; the mountains like cheap engravings, only black and white ; black, damp rocks scowling through eternal ice ; and every height the home of a glacier : these are a few of our mistakes regarding that beautiful country. The idea of flowers, and birds, and verdure, and trees, and hills wooded to the top, and forests high up the mountain sides, and flowing rivers, and unfrozen wells, is not easily associated with Switzerland by learners of geography and readers of appalling accidents. Everything Alpine is all that many of us think of Switzerland.

Like most things that we think instead of thinking about, that originate in thought instead of originating thoughts, we have a good deal to correct in our knowledge of Switzerland when we go and see it.

We all know, however, that it is the most picturesque country on the continent of Europe. We know also that a great many people go and visit its scenery every year, and that members of the Alpine Club risk their backs, necks, legs, and arms, for the sake of saying they have been on the top of a barren, bleak, repulsive mountain, and of exhibiting the intimate kinship of valour and vanity.

The mountains, meadows, lakes, glaciers, precipices, and Swiss cottages, are objects which my wish is that we may all be there to see ; and may we all come home again with life more vigorous and limbs no fewer.

If we do go, we shall not get on very well without a guide. A guide is a sort of guarantee against mistakes and mishaps. He takes the tourist to places he should not miss, and keeps him out of danger. The harrowing accidents which supply the broad black lines that surround the record of almost every season's Alpine adventures, are never, or at least very seldom, to be laid to the poor guides' account. It is a fatiguing life of ever-frowning danger that they lead. Their experience is purchased by them at a great price, and is sold for what money they can get. The risk at which they have learned so well to take care of the rash and reckless, is akin to the sin and sorrow which stand in a sort of parental relationship to wisdom. Still they like it. They come home from their exposure proud of their exploits, and rest a little, and return again to their dangers. In former days there were fewer guides, and each of them had a better chance of becoming a man of mark. Travelling in Switzerland was not then a matter of course. The traveller was no mere tourist. He went to see something he meant to tell all the world about; and the guide was unavoidably a figure in the foreground of his picturesque story. In those days Frank Miller was first among the foremost of the famous guides. A bold, brave, and kindly guide was Frank. He was a remarkably intelligent man besides. We all know that in literature a good subject to write about, and that subject all to himself, is more than half the fortune and fame of a gifted author. A similar truism may be

mentioned regarding guides. Something of his own to tell, and which he tells as an intelligent man should, is wonderfully attractive, even to saucy, inconsiderate tourists, and used to be a sort of bread of life to travellers. Frank had something very terrible to tell about his father before him; and as he was his father's only son, the subject was his own with a security quite unassailable. Other men might tell the story, and they did; but not one of them would dare to assert that he was Frank's father's son. His father was the only inhabitant of the village of Goldau who escaped the woeful catastrophe of the Rufiberg. The old man never terminated his tale of this overwhelming calamity, and Frank never tired of hearing him repeat it. Nor did he ever tire afterwards of telling it to any and all who would listen to its terrors. This event in the line from which Frank Miller sprung was the one great cataclysm which had appalled its course. Poor Frank's death was to be the next. But, meantime, his father's escape was sufficient fame and satisfying fortune to our intrepid and industrious guide.

'One evening, sixty years ago,' were nearly the very words in which Frank told his family heirloom of story for the last time, 'about five in the afternoon, the villagers of Goldau heard a deep grumbling rumble, like a prolonged grunt from the earth in a bad temper. Every man, and woman, and boy, and girl of them rushed out of their cottages to see what they had heard. And they saw the Rufiberg giving himself a mountain-

ous shrug, like an angry giant rousing himself in wrath from sleep. The startled firs looked like his hair on end. He scowled over the valley upon Goldau, as if it had been vexing his repose. A watchful friend sounded a timeous note of alarm. It was drowned by the howl of the helpless people, who were seized with horror and stricken with terror. Instead of fleeing out of reach of the destroyer, they fled into the church. Groans and gnashing of teeth were the only sounds to be heard ; they drowned the bugle sound that would have saved them. The women sought a vain protection in their husbands' embraces. Fathers and mothers hugged their children ; but their time was come. Nearly half a mile of murdering rock wrenched itself from the mountain, and, with the roar, and dash, and rush, and crash of an irritated and revengeful demon of the Alps, the Rufiberg hugged the village of Goldau and all its hopeless inhabitants. Its anger seemed kindled against every living thing. It tore up and tossed about or crushed the trees ; and my father heard some wild beasts yell after all the human inhabitants were hushed and still. It was my father who saw the danger in time, and sounded the alarm till his breath could not blow another note.'

Such was Frank's story as he told it shortly before he encountered his own sad end. It will be seen there is some attempt at effect in his way of putting it. No doubt it reads, when written, a little stilted ; but Frank's looks and naturally dramatic attitudes and ges-

tures when he was telling it with all the eagerness of his Swiss nature, which, we are not to forget, is a nature which springs and spreads itself out in the south of Europe, made the stilting seem sublime.

The destruction of Goldau was a novelty in the world of sensation. The grave in which so many were buried in abject consternation while yet alive, was visited and looked on with a grin of curiosity. The chaos was attractive to the curious ; and this visitation of God was one of the causes which multiplied the visits of the gay and the giddy.

CHAPTER II.



HERE was no guide so constantly or so profitably employed as Frank Miller. And no man loved the occupation of his life more than he. With his veins throbbing full of buoyant life in bounding health, he became every day more daring, and, alas ! less careful of himself.

He had been three years married at the time this simple record of his fate and his son's fortunes dates as its commencement. His wife was Madeline Gardner, the daughter of a poor but respectable farmer called Robert Gardner. Madeline had never known herself by any other name than Lena, and we shall give her the name she liked, and which Frank Miller loved.

At this time, then, two Scotch gentlemen sent for Frank. They wished him to attend them on a tour over the Bernese Alps, and their final exploit was to be towards their eastern extremity, where they proposed to mount the Schreckhorn. Lena did not like this engagement, which would take Frank away so far and keep him away so long. He laughed with looks of tender love at the terrors of his gentle wife. Lena was indeed gentle. She was a lady in her own right, as the in-

heritrix of the heart which God had given her. Lena thought he was doing so well without needing to go to such a dangerous distance, that he could quite afford to let these gentlemen go to another guide. And it must be acknowledged Frank rather agreed with her. But he thought he would go with them notwithstanding, especially as the pay was tempting. He left home with more reluctance and less of his own resolute concealment of emotion than he had ever been known to show. His little boy was two years of age.

‘He tumbles my heart about so,’ said Frank, after giving him his last hearty manly caress.

Frank Miller left his cottage in July, and at the end of September he had not come home again.

To climb the Schreckhorn was confessedly difficult. It was this fact that inspired the two Scotchmen with a determination to stand on its highest peak. Any noticeable thing that has not been done is a lure to the daring. Fate and fame are sure to build a temporary tabernacle in the place of its accomplishment, and legions of devotees and victims find the longings of their hearts towards that place.

Frank guided and guarded the two adventurers to the very summit of this ambition of their lives. But it is more easy to clamber up than to come down a glacier. And in spite of all Frank’s most approved precautions, they were all three destroyed in the descent. A rock to which they attached the rope by which they were bound to one another, broke loose from its moorings,



Three brave, loving men perished.—Page 10.

and three brave, loving men perished. They fell over a precipice a thousand feet deep.

This awful accident was witnessed by many. The inhabitants of the valley had watched these pioneers of the climbers of the Schreckhorn with feelings much warmer than curiosity. Their interest was deep in making their mountain an attraction to tourists. They saw with horror the destruction of the three victims of a merciless fate. They pitied their relations, and regretted that this would damage the prospects of the valley. But in this latter feeling they showed themselves simple. The wisdom of touring humanity does not warn off from scenes of terror like this.

The news of this accident spread rapidly, and, as bad news always does, it seemed to fly on fleeter wing than usual to the canton of Schwytz, where Lena and her orphan darling lived.

The poor young widow had soon to bestir herself in that way which puts limits to the utterance of the heart's dark sorrows. Frank had left her a little piece of land and some goats. And she tended the goats and cultivated the land, and her little Frank was always by her side.

The neighbours were kind to Lena, and she was not afflicted with more than an average of bootless advice in the circumstances.

'Cheer up, Lena. Patience, Lena. The Lord is good, Lena. When little Francey is a man he will work for you. He will be a good boy. He is a good boy

already. Tell him often of his father's death, and he'll be afraid to become a guide.'

These were the kindly counsels of her neighbours. And they meant more than the words could hold.

'I shall never let him leave me,' Lena would say, while looking all her heart's love at her brave little boy. 'When he can go to school, I shall leave this cottage and go down and live in Schwytz. I shall be sure to meet good people there who will be kind to him and me. I shall work hard, and after I get Francey educated, surely there will be some situation to be found for him which will keep him from ever thinking to become a guide.'

Frank was a manly little fellow now. Every mother knows what a charm there is about a child at four years of age. Lena saw a great deal of his father in Frank. He was fearless and affectionate just like him. It was a sort of saddened joy that beamed all over his mother's face while she gazed on his image.

How tender the child was of his mother! He used to mark a flower near the fissure of a rock with his eye, but would not go to pull it while she was looking. When he could get a few minutes out from her gaze he was possessor of the flower.

Years passed sweetly over the widow and orphan. Their poverty was not oppressive, for Lena and Frank had not many wants.

The time came for the only son of the late brave guide to go to school. A proud woman was Lena when

she took her boy by the hand, and brought him down from the mountain, knowing she was taking him to school. He was now six years old. This visit to the town of Schwytz was an epoch in the life of the young widow.

It had this drawback : Francey would not be always under her own eye. But it had this too in it : he would take a proud place among the boys. No one of them looked so handsome. His coal-black flowing hair and his bright brown eyes, with his cheeks so fresh and clear, and, above all, his sweet temper and kindly courage, soon verified his mother's predictions to herself regarding him. His coming to this school was an event to all the boys. He forthwith became their model and the master's pet.

This new life was quite to Frank's taste. His liveliness and instinctive independence found here more of the scope they could not help craving. And a happy boy was he when he recounted to his mother in the evening all the exploits of the day.

Frank soon learned to read, and was beginning to write not so badly at all. But he came to a sort of halt. To the master's great regret he did not seem inclined to fathom the depths of these mysteries, after he had learned at the surface of them what they were all about.

The mountains were the school Frank loved most now. The bigger boys laid no plan for raids or excursions without the aid of Frank Miller, and he was the inspiring energy of the fulfilment of all their frolics.

He began now to be away out of the sight of all responsible people for three or four hours at a time.


‘Oh! Frank,’ his mother would say, ‘I am all of a tremble all the time I cannot find you.’

He would kiss his mother for such a speech, and make one return which was by no means of the comforting kind she wanted.

‘Oh! mother, it is so fine, I was up the Hacken, and saw the lake,’ would glow out of his eyes as well as be spoken with ardent meaning.

Lena used to smile and sigh.

CHAPTER III.

CHWYTZ, the capital of the canton, has given its name to the whole country, of which it is one of the constituents, and is but a little town. It stands nestled under the mountains not far from Lake Lowertz. It is situated, and looks as if it were placed there to let travellers repose in security after the dangers of their pleasures are over. The trim streets, the clean, regular buildings, and the healthy, kindly faces of the inhabitants, have all an inviting look. But it seems to be regarded rather as a beseeching than an inviting look. For travellers seldom stop at it. This may be because it does not look like the capital of any place according to the notions people have of foreign capitals.

There were two strangers in Schwytz, however, at the time when Lena brought down her boy to school. At the end of the principal street there stands a grand house for the place. Two ladies were living in it, and kept themselves quite isolated from all the society of Schwytz. They seemed to be well to do, as might be judged from the number of servants they kept. Every day they went up the mountain a considerable

way. They went regularly to church. Sometimes they were seen sitting out in the garden busy with different sorts of needle-work. The one seemed always intent on some piece of elegant fancy work. The other was always sewing away at necessary and ordinary articles of dress. Neither seemed ever to pay much attention to the magnificent scenery all around. At least, their eyes never rested upon it.

These two ladies were a mystery to the inhabitants of Schwytz, the capital of the canton. But their mystery need not be preserved in this story. They were sisters. Mrs. St. Victor was a widow, and she had no children. She was left with an ample fortune, but she had no heart to enjoy it. Weariness of life and all within it, was the dominant feeling of her heart daily. She had lost a lovely little boy. His last smile upon her had been from the cradle, and the memory of that smile seemed to banish gladness from her soul for ever. Vainly did her sister, Miss Louisa Cadny, try to cheer her. Miss Louisa was of a nature whose industry seemed never to flag. She thought the cure for all her sister's ailments would be to engage her in some useful or charitable occupation. But her eloquence and her example had hitherto been ineffectual.

The two sisters lived together, but were by no means one in soul or in sorrow. Miss Cadny made a very considerable sacrifice for the sake of her sister, whose ailments she did not much sympathize with, nor even seem to understand, if indeed a nature like hers can ever

be brought to comprehend a mind's ill-health. A sojourn in Switzerland, however, was the most recent change of scene and circumstances they had made in each other's company.

Mrs. St. Victor was not very well understood by the servants either. They thought her whimsical. They said she took unreasonable fancies into her head. But at the same time they obeyed her implicitly, with all her whims and fancies. One of their mistress's orders was never to let a child come near the house. And this order they obeyed as far as lay in their power, which was not very completely, considering that children are in the way of having wills of their own in their movements.

And yet Mrs. St. Victor never seemed to take any notice of the fact that her domestics were zealously obedient. Pre-occupied and indifferent to everything outside of her heart, she kept company only with her own sad thoughts.

One evening in August the rain poured and the thunder roared. A knock was heard at the outer door of Mrs. St. Victor's house. Luke, the footman, asked in a tone which in itself forbade entrance, 'Who's there?'

'A little boy drowned in the rain. Let me in, please. I shall not trouble you long. The shower will soon be over. I see the Hacken,' was the petition presented, and the account of the weather given by a juvenile observer of its ways.

'A little boy!' said Catherine, Mrs. St. Victor's maid. 'You must open the door, Luke. Mistress would open the door herself.'

'You think so? you are wrong. Let in a boy and lose my place! Mistress has been particularly low-spirited to-day.' These were the replies of prudent Luke, the footman.

'Talk as you like,' said the kind-hearted Catherine, 'people have hearts for all that, and I suppose we may be allowed to use them.' She was opening the door all this time, and she continued opening it without stopping to tell what she was doing.

'Poor little fellow! and he's crying.' Catherine had a light in her hand, and she saw a little boy drenched to the skin, and he was trying to protect a young lamb he was carrying under the lapel of his jacket. His long hair was soaked, and was hanging down over his face, for he could not brush it back, both of his hands being engaged with the lamb. He seemed to care only for the lamb. In fact it was for its discomfort that he was crying.

'Thank you, kind lady,' he said to Catherine when she let him in. 'I am not crying about myself. A kind shepherd gave me this lamb, and I should have been so sorry if the poor little thing had died.'

Catherine. What is your name, and where do you live?

Frank. What? Do you not know me after living so long in Schwytz? I am Frank. Everybody calls me

Frank, the guide's boy. My father was Frank, the guide. I am the guide's boy, and I live with my mother at the other end of the town.

Catherine (in a whisper). Come in, you cannot stand out in all this rain.

The whisper and the signal to keep very quiet were the consequence of Catherine's hearing a door opening on the landing at the top of the stair.

Frank. The rain is nothing. I wish you would give me a basket to carry my poor little lamb in. That is not much to ask, pretty lady, is it?

Catherine. You must get yourself dried, child, before you go away. People will think you have been tumbling in the lake.

Frank. Oh! do you see yon light away down yonder?

Catherine. Well?

Frank. Yon is my mother's lantern. Poor mother! she is out looking for me. She knows it is only the rain that keeps me. Thank you! when my clothes are dry, I shall bring back the basket.

Catherine. Never mind the basket. My mistress will perhaps not be pleased.

Frank. Does she not like children?

Catherine. Yes, but she lost a pretty little boy; and she has never been well since. And perhaps it might grieve her to see you and hear you speaking.

Frank. Poor lady! that's another thing. I shall come and take a walk past her house. I shall sing the

Ranz des Vaches, and then you will say to yourself, 'Frank and his lamb are all right.'

The lantern was coming nearer and nearer. Frank made a run towards it as well as he could with his basketful. It was his mother, as he said.

Catherine thought she had reason to fear that she had given offence by opening the door. But the thought of it did not disturb her kind heart during her sound sleep that night.





CHAPTER IV.

NEXT morning, while Catherine was putting up her lady's hair, Mrs. St. Victor asked her—

‘What sort of boy was that you were talking with at the door last night?’

‘I beg your pardon, ma'am,’ said Catherine humbly. ‘I could not put the little fellow away when he was crying. The rain, and the thunder, and the flashes of lightning were—’

‘I hope you don't think it necessary to apologize to me for such an act of kindness, Catherine?’ said her mistress, trying to look round and up at Catherine, who grew busier with her hair, under the apprehension that the question seemed to awaken in her.

‘Oh! no, ma'am, I am sure I don't,’ said Catherine,

who was not at all sure. 'And I was only going to say—'

'You have said quite enough, Catherine—and I heard all you said last night. That boy's voice had a strange effect on my ears. I felt more than the music of melody in it. I say I felt it; it would scarcely be correct to say I only heard a deep harmony in his voice. It affected me as if it were capable of harmonizing my woful past life with my weary present existence.'

'Indeed, ma'am,' said Catherine, who understood no more of all this than that her mistress, whom she sincerely respected, had received comfort from her seeming disobedience.

'I wish to see that boy. Will you try and find him, and bring him to me to-day, Catherine?' said Mrs. St. Victor.

There was a strange blending of astonishment and triumph in Catherine's voice, and look, and manner, when she communicated to Miss Cadny the order her sister had just given. Miss Cadny understood this whim or fancy, or whimsical fancy, or fanciful whim, no more than any of the many which had puzzled her unimaginative brain. But after a fruitless attempt at disentangling the ravelled skein, she said, half to Catherine, half to herself—

'Well, perhaps it is not a bad sign. This very romantic country may after all bring us some sort of good luck out of the rain, and thunder, and lightning.'

Frank's clothes were hanging out to dry in the sun

next morning, and he was eagerly telling his mother over and over again of all the kind words of Catherine—whom he took for one of the ladies of the house—when, to his delight, she walked up to the cottage door.

‘Ah ! good lady,’ cried Frank, ‘have you come to inquire for my little lamb and me ? We are quite well. It was my mother, just as I said, who was out with the lantern looking for me. She was so uneasy about me.’

Lena offered Catherine a seat ; and the two excellent women, both young still, began to converse.

‘He is a great comfort to me, you see,’ said Lena in the course of the conversation.

‘I am certain of it,’ said Catherine, who looked what she said, and was looking at Frank’s happy face.

‘My mistress heard all we said last night,’ she told Frank.

‘Was she angry ?’ asked the boy.

‘Not at all. She wishes you to come and see her to-day,’ was the answer.

‘Shall I bring my lamb ?’ was a question which revealed a good deal of Francey’s heart that morning.

‘She did not mention the lamb, but you may bring it if you like,’ was the wise reply.

The lady’s maid was, as most of us know already, a really good-hearted creature. She could not help noticing the poverty in which Lena and Frank were living, and she was glad at heart at the thought that her mistress could, and very probably would, do something for them. And more from this feeling towards

the young widow and her son than from any unworthy curiosity, she led Lena into a long account of her husband and his death, and all the joy of her married life, and sorrow of her widowhood.

Lena began at the beginning of the great family tale, which might be ranked as a tradition now. It was being recorded, to all practical purposes, by a third generation. The story of the Ruffberg burying all the inhabitants of Goldau thrilled Catherine with wonder and awe.

‘That is only a little of it,’ said Lena. ‘Everybody knows all about it.’

While she was going over the less exciting details of her widowhood, Catherine was noting down with her eye an inventory of the goods the cottage contained. A cottage all built of wood was itself a curiosity to a lady’s maid used to structures of a more substantial appearance. This was the first time she had visited any of the people of the town. The small windows, all made alike, in consideration of the excessive cold and the oppressive heat, the even flooring, and every corner, and corner of a corner, turned to some convenience, were all full of interest to her. Wood, always wood, and nothing but wood, was a great wonder to Catherine. It was more. It opened up to her new possibilities in the nature of things.

‘Ah!’ she thought, ‘if Luke could give up a good deal of his Parisian nonsense, we might be very happy in a wooden cottage, and make a very good show of housekeeping besides.’

Only an hour was necessary to weld Catherine and Lena into fast friends.

It was agreed between them that Frank should go and see Mrs. St. Victor, and take his lamb with him. But it would be better to wait till next day.

Next day, accordingly, Frank set out with his lamb in his arms. His neat and well-knitted ankles were shot through his pantaloons, to such an extent as to show that he had been growing lately.

And his jacket and vest bore testimony to the same fact in nature. Both his arms being lovingly employed, Frank's hair got over his eyes again ; and if it was not soaked with rain this time, it was no less troublesome in the circumstances. He strode along notwithstanding ; and as he marched, the emblem of the bravery of innocence, up to the door, Catherine was looking out for him. She said, when he came forward—

‘ Don't take any notice if the lady weeps. You will be the first boy she has spoken to since her own nice little baby boy died. Hush ! Be quiet.’

Catherine took Frank into Mrs. St. Victor's room, with his lamb in his arms. When that lady saw him, the blood rushed to her face, and in spite of all the resolutions she had been forming, she burst into a flood of tears, which seemed to relieve her from a sort of suffocation. Frank at once laid down his lamb, and ran up to her, and stood on his tiptoes to say in her ear in a whisper of reverence and real concern,

‘ Don't cry !’



‘Don’t cry!’—Page 24.

Catherine came forward to take him away, but to her surprise, and not to her sorrow, Mrs. St. Victor leant down to let the boy give her the gentle timid kisses she saw playing on his lips.

Mrs. St. Victor herself was as much taken at unawares by this little scene as her maid. She caressed the lamb, which had followed Frank to her feet.

Miss Cadny came in, and when she was told what had happened, even her practical, almost pragmatical, nature was softened into caressing Frank. She got into conversation with him, and was delighted with the brightness of his remarks.

‘He would not be the worse of new pantaloons,’ whispered Catherine to her mistress.

‘I was noticing that, and shall attend to it,’ said Mrs. St. Victor in a low, sad voice.

Frank came away, after a considerable trial of his modesty in all the caresses he received. Strange! He seemed to think them all as they should have been. Quite unruffled, he was taken by Catherine to be introduced to Luke and the other servants. It cannot be said that Catherine was quite composed. She was proud of the good which had flowed from her half-rebellious kindness the night before last. And the servants did not display, nor indeed feel, any of the jealousy so natural when a new favourite dawns upon a family. Frank took luncheon with them all. And Catherine selected for him the nicest bits of everything on their well-stocked table.

CHAPTER V.



HEN Frank was out with his mother that day looking after the goats, he had a great deal to say to her about the lady's sadness, and the kindness of everybody in the house.

Let us leave them conversing so lovingly, and listen to Mrs. St. Victor.

'Louisa,' she said to her sister after Frank left the room, 'it was a wish of mine to see this boy, and you would scarcely believe how much he softens the sharpness of my sorrow.'

'I am not surprised at it,' said the analytical Louisa. 'Sorrow is not always at the same pitch of keenness, any more than joy. Our evil to-day is our cure to-morrow. I hope this first contact with those who are still alive will encourage you to endeavour to rejoin the common life of the world. For your own good you should put an end to your loneliness. What would become of society if the sorrowing and the rejoicing were two separate camps, or separate listeners to God's voice, as men and women are in some places of worship? It is the jostling of the glad with the gloomy which helps both to do good. I am delighted that this little

boy is a comfort to you. I like him very much. I think we ought to go together and visit him and his mother. Perhaps she would allow us to help her a little.'

'My dear sister,' said Mrs. St. Victor, gratified to find Louisa so fully agreeing with her regarding Frank, 'I have been thinking of that boy all night, since ever I heard his sweet voice at the door. I should like to adopt him. Indeed I have resolved to do it. You look astonished. You don't think his mother would object, do you? It would secure her boy's good fortune.'

'What will you say to the mother? You cannot expect to succeed in any representation of her poverty which, I understand from Catherine, does not sit very heavy upon her,' was Louisa's difficulty.

'She will surely understand what is for the good of her child,' was her reply, which showed less practical acquaintance with other people's feelings than Louisa possessed.

'She will not fail to understand that,' said the sensible sister; 'but I doubt if she will see that his good will consist in leaving her. May you not be preparing new sorrows for yourself in this? You know nothing of the boy's disposition. Will he be able to adapt himself to a mode of life so different from anything he has seen?'

'Wealth does not leave the nature unchanged,' said Mrs. St. Victor, evidently not a very accurate observer. 'A boy will easily adapt himself to the ready supply of all his wants.'

‘Yes, and may become, by a very direct process, a sottish trifier or a selfish tyrant,’ remarked the philosophic Louisa.

‘I am resolved ; I mean to adopt the boy.’ This was meant by Mrs. St. Victor to close the conversation, which had begun to irritate her more than she could bear with calmness.

After sitting together in silence for a little, Mrs. St. Victor left the room. She did not wish either to say anything in her agitation, or to hear any further remarks from her sister.

She called for Catherine, and told her to go and fetch Frank to her again. Frank was away by this time, and when she went to his mother’s house, he had gone out to play with the other boys. His mother could not say when he would come in,—perhaps not before dark. So Catherine resolved to wait till next day. It was on this next day that Frank was out with his mother, tending the goats, and telling her about the lady, as I have already written. And when Catherine came for him, he went with her, having received full leave from his mother.

When he was brought to Mrs. St. Victor, she asked him how his mother was, and she listened with all her soul to his answers. There was a change passing over this lady. Whether for good or for evil, she was no longer as she had been a few days before. Her identity was interrupted. She called the feeling an illusion. It was the revived consciousness of being a mother. But she hoped the illusion would save her from the selfishness

and other losses of human worth, which perpetual ailment and sorrow entail. So long indifferent to all, she now felt a rush of tenderness towards this boy. Energy and firm resolve took the place of listless, resistless weariness. Her sister's reflexions were not for a moment to be allowed to crush this resurrection of her heart.

Mrs. St. Victor was now alive to an end to be gained by delicate and difficult means. She had to induce Lena to part with her boy. And preliminary to this, she would require to gain the good opinion of all the neighbours who took an interest in Lena ; that is, of all the inhabitants of Schwytz. She now went out and about accordingly ; and in her conversations with the people, made frequent reference to the fine effect of the air of their country upon people like herself, who had come to it an invalid.

Mrs. St. Victor called on Lena. All her neighbours rejoiced in the good which this might bring to the amiable young widow.

‘It is not nice for Frank to have to stay in while his clothes are drying,’ she said ; ‘will you allow me to give him another suit?’

Lena was delighted, of course.

Mrs. St. Victor asked Lena's permission for Frank to keep her company in her walks. Lena consented, and Frank was enchanted. He babbled away during these walks, always very respectful, and evidently deeply interested in the lady he was trying to amuse.

Miss Cadny began to observe the good effects of this

new influence that was acting on her sister, and she felt more tender towards her, being now convinced that she was making an effort to arouse herself.

It was now September. The sky had faded in its brightness. The Hacken had his head often in his winter's covering. The mists were brooding over the lake. It was time for Mrs. St. Victor and all her little colony to think of removing from Schwytz.

It was necessary to bring matters to a bearing with Lena about the boy.

'You are a happy mother, Lena,' she said, when she called on her with this view. 'Frank is a beautiful boy. He is growing. What do you mean to do with him?'

Lena. That is what I am asking myself every day. He is his father all over again. I shall do anything I can for him that will keep him from being a guide.

Mrs. St. Victor. All guides do not come to the same sad end as his excellent father.

Lena. I think that too, sometimes. But a mother's heart will not hear reason after his father's accident. I think with horror of his being a guide. But you are much better, ma'am; I hope the air of Schwytz has done you good?

Mrs. St. Victor. Little Frank has done me good. I don't know how I am to leave him. I love the dear boy tenderly.

Lena. He loves you too, ma'am.

Mrs. St. Victor. I must say I share your feeling of horror at the thought of his becoming a guide. I have

observed his firmness and courage in our walks. He is even a little rash.

Lena. I am so afraid of it.

Mrs. St. Victor. Do you know, Lena, I should like to take him away out of the reach of danger. Would you allow him to go with me? I should adopt him if you were willing. He would be my heir.

Lena. But you could not be his mother.

Mrs. St. Victor. I could secure his happiness. And I am sure that would be yours.

Lena. Yes, if he was with me.

Mrs. St. Victor. I only wished to mention it to you. Perhaps you will think over the matter.

Lena. Don't think any more of it, ma'am, please. Mrs. St. Victor bade Lena good morning, saying to herself, 'The battle is not lost.'





CHAPTER VI.

LENA felt a desolation of loneliness when Mrs. St. Victor left. Not wishing any one to see her sorrow, she shut the door ; and yet she believed that every mother would regard the proposal as she did. Part with her boy ! How could such a thought enter the mind of a woman ?

Lena could not sit down. She moved from end to side of her cot. She stood and looked round her. No doubt, many comforts were awaiting from her humble dwelling, but had she not hands ? Patience for a few more years would be rewarded, among other ways, with the wages which Frank would be receiving. He was a promising boy. Her fears about the future were foolish. They showed her that her trust in the Father of the fatherless was weak. Such thoughts were Lena's. She said aloud : ' I will be my own boy's guide. He shall be taught all the meaning of the word mother.'

Strong in this resolution, Lena opened her cottage door, and went out to find more room to breathe. She had not walked a hundred yards when she saw two of Frank's comrades helping him home.

'What is wrong?' almost screamed his mother.

'Nothing at all, mother,' was Frank's answer, with his own bright smile.

'He wanted to teach this little white goat of his to behave itself,' said his companions, entering into Frank's desire to banish all anxiety from Lena's mind. 'It is always running away. Frank made a jump and slipped, but we got hold of him.'

'Yes, before he fell to the bottom, like—'. Lena shuddered, and said no more, but offered to take the arm held by one of the boys, a procedure which neither he nor Frank would allow.

Was this accident a light from heaven? Was the help these two boys were present to afford a Father's merciful voice, to warn her against an idolatry which would be punished if she went on in it? These were questions which were shaping an answer for themselves.

There is no burden so weighty as a secret. The darkest secret in Lena's simple nature was the doubt she expressed in these questions. But it bore heavily upon her.

After a sleepless night Lena resolved upon seeking counsel. She went to a neighbour who had known her from infancy. Dolly White had shown an unselfish care for her, and had given her prudent advice many a



‘To teach this little white goat.’—Page 34.

time before this. It was to Dolly she told all about her present pressing difficulty.

‘Go away from home and from his mother!’ said Dolly in a sort of bewilderment, and wondering attempt at an honest judicial decision. ‘It is not a thing that has ever happened before in Schwytz—leastwise not in the same way. At the same time, it is wonderful what does happen. It is often worse than a story, and better too at times. But all don’t get rich who try. Many who try hard in odd sorts of ways don’t. I must say, however, it would be mighty fine and convenient to have money in the bank, and plenty in one’s pocket. If you or I had it, Lena, we could build a new cottage, or buy up a bit of that meadow land, and put a few more goats out to feed.’

‘But we would rather have our children,’ said Lena, who was in no judicial humour.

‘My dear child,’ said Dolly, ‘there are two sides in all the battles of life. You will be very sad without Francey; but, look at me; have I much to cheer me? What remains to me after some years of happiness, which every one thought so great, and which was? Two graves! You see, Lena, people don’t know what is before them in the world. I don’t know what to say to you. For, after all, our children are our children.’

Lena was neither counselled nor consoled. Her burden was still upon her. When she came home she found Frank impatient of his slight lameness, and full of

anxiety about how the lady would get on without him in her walk that day.

‘You would not like to go away from home with her, would you, Frank?’ was a question in the answer to which Lena felt that a good deal of his and her own lot in life depended.

‘Oh! mother, I should so like!’ was the answer which shaped his fortunes.

‘Would you leave your mother, Frank?’ asked Lena.

‘But I should come back, to be sure. I should bring lots of little yellow pieces, and empty them all into your lap. Mrs. St. Victor has so many of them. If she would give me some, you could buy the two goats which John up the hill wants to sell, and the cow from old Henry over yonder. We should be rich, and you would not need to work so hard.’ This was the argumentative answer of a boy’s imagination.

‘You will not go till I say you may?’ asked Lena in fondness and sorrow.

‘Me! No, mother! You don’t think I would?’ responded from Frank’s soul to his mother’s. ‘I like to climb the mountains, and if I was a man I should go up to the top of the Rigi, and run all over the sea of ice. But it would only be to see you happy, mother.’

Lena wept and clasped her boy close to herself, and Frank did not seem to have come into the presence of the possibilities of his future for the first time. The slow results of time are painfully anticipated by poverty.

Frank was a manly boy in a sense in which it was not altogether good for him.

The lameness from the fall was not a serious matter. In a few days Frank was out and about as usual. Lena knew that Mrs. St. Victor was fond of wild thyme, and she sent Frank along with a little bundle of it. She was drifting before circumstances. This was one of her simple devices to see the direction in which they were likely to drive her and her boy.

'Would you go to Lucerne with us, Frank?' asked Mrs. St. Victor, as if this had been the first time such a thought had occurred to her.

'I should so like if my mother would let me,' was the answer the lady desired and received.

'You are quite right to think of your mother. You are a good boy. Go and ask her, and if she says "yes," we set off to-morrow,' was Mrs. St. Victor's reply; and she felt that all the happiness she had latterly set her heart upon, depended on the result of this new shape the negotiation had taken.

Frank ran all the way home to tell his mother what the lady had said.

'You may go,' said Lena, with an abruptness which surprised Frank, and made him think for the shadow of a moment of not going. He looked at his mother, however, and seeing how sweet and calm her features were, he escaped from the shadow, and gently displayed his great joy at the permission granted him.

On the evening of that day Mrs. St. Victor spent two

hours with Lena in her cottage. What passed between these two I never tried to learn.

On the day following, Frank, in new clothes from head to foot, kissed his mother, and jumped up on the seat of a carriage beside the driver.

The carriage drove on, and for a long time Frank only looked behind. He tossed kisses to his mother. He waved his new cap, and he set his face in the same direction as the driver, when neither his mother nor the cottage was any longer in sight.





CHAPTER VII.



AT eight years of age a boy is very much pleased with anybody who shows him substantial marks of kindness. A new sensation is greedily appropriated at that age. This is especially true if the boy is in new surroundings, as well as in the midst of scenes hitherto unfamiliar to him. It was strikingly true in Frank's case. When he was on his first journey, he needed no one to interest him in all the strange things that were successively meeting his eye. Mrs. St. Victor and her sister were agreeably disappointed in this. Frank often turned round and showed them his face beaming with all the glow of joys; and they were delighted to see it. His journey from Schwytz to Brunnen was gone over with great and in the finest of weather. Catherine was
On the e

ordered to keep a watchful eye over Frank. This meant more than a care for his safety. A regard for Mrs. St. Victor's respectability was quite understood by her maid to be an important element in the orders she received. Frank must not be allowed to tell everybody that he was only the son of a guide ; for this might lead to his telling other things about other people.

Catherine kept hold of Frank's hand. This seemed to the young mountaineer a very unnecessary piece of trouble to put herself to. Not only so, but it was only a lively recollection of all Catherine's past kindnesses which induced the independent Swiss boy to submit to it. It was not till he got to the banks of the Lake of Lucerne, that his attention was diverted from this species of captivity. He got so much to admire then that he made his bondage a freedom.

Mrs. St. Victor was wonderfully pleased with the success of her undertaking thus far. She ordered a boat for an hour's sail till dinner should be ready, and took Frank with her.

He was nearly beside himself with a joy altogether new. The style of things was grand, and Frank was by nature capable of enjoying this. The wide horizon seemed narrow enough for his expanded spirit. He called Mrs. St. Victor's attention to all the wonders of the splendid panorama. The country seemed to him a scene of enchantment. The wild ducks were performing all their movements for his special amusement.

'Well done !' he said, 'my new friends ! I will tell

the ducks of Lowertz when I go home that you are as clever as they are. I am very glad to see you.'

Mrs. St. Victor did not feel that it would be wise to let the boy know yet how long she intended to keep him, and how far from home he would have to go. It cost her a struggle to let him out of her sight; but she felt it would be better to let him take his food with the servants. Confident and old-fashioned, the favourite did not see the effect his presence had upon these enviers of his lot. He had now aroused their jealousy, or rather their jealousy had already been aroused by Mrs. St. Victor's conduct towards him. They indulged in the hope, however, that this new whim of hers would soon pass over, as so many earlier ones had evaporated.

Frank did not forget his mother. He acted a sort of by-play all to himself every time he was alone, and often when he was not alone, in his rehearsals to her of all the fine things he had seen. He expected every day now that to-morrow, at the latest, the coachman would be told to drive them back to Schwytz. He was a good deal surprised when Mrs. St. Victor mentioned to him that they had to go further away from home, as far away, indeed, as Lucerne.

'So far, ma'am?' he said, with a look that betrayed disappointment.

'So far! Can the little man be tired of us already?' was the reply to his disappointment.

'Oh! no; but what will my mother say?' asked Frank



Everything was new to Frank.—Page 44.

‘Your mother knows that you are going to Lucerne, and you will be a good boy,’ closed the conversation.

Catherine invited Frank to a pretty walk along the bank of the lake. The steamers so brisk, and the more timid vessels which had only sails, were a novelty and a spectacle to Frank. But to go on board of one of these steamers, this was an event. To say that it was a pleasure would be to try and make weakness utter strength. And then the passengers! It must be admitted that the beauties of nature were less heeded by our universal admirer now. So many different people, and different sorts of people, in the same limited space had never been dreamed of by Frank before. The children, above all, were objects of the most intense interest to the boy. He dared not speak to them; this was another gall in the bondage he felt at Catherine’s hand. He listened to them with sparkling pleasure.

Everything was new to Frank.

This admiration, or rather wonder, at new faces, takes possession of more experienced tourists than he was. It becomes a lower feeling as people trifle with it. But there is much that is good in the studies of comparative physiognomy which we are all prone to.

There were more curious and less amiable observers on board the steamer than Frank. Mrs. St. Victor received a good deal of their unnecessary notice. ‘Who was she? She seemed to require a good deal of attention. This boy is not her son certainly; and yet her eyes are never off him. That maid of hers always sticks

to him, or we might soon know. She always looks to her mistress for directions about the boy. He looks a nice enough lad, and would make himself pleasant, no doubt, if she would not tie herself to him at that rate.' Such were a few of the remarks made.

Mrs. St. Victor did not leave him entirely to Catherine.

'Do you see the Rigi? That is Mount Pilatus. When you are a man you shall go up to the top and use an Alpen-stock like these ladies and gentlemen,' was a forgetful remark of this lady, who was not his mother.

'I shall not need a stick like that; it has a sharp iron thing at the end of it. We run up the hills as soon as we can walk,' was an awkward sort of reply in the circumstances.

Mrs. St. Victor signalled to Catherine to take the boy away and get him something to eat. Catherine understood her duty, and why it was her duty, and she took Frank to the steward. But he was not hungry. He went up on deck again; and, whether he had fathomed the last move of Catherine or not, he made no further remarks of any sort till they reached Lucerne. This beautiful town, so finely reflected from the lake, unlocked his lips, and he said, 'The end of my travels! I shall be very glad to get home to my mother.'

At Lucerne everything that could be devised was done to amuse Frank. Drives in the carriage, presents, and wonderful promises were frequent and ample; but his curiosity was now weaker than his love and longing

for his mother. He kept constantly asking Catherine when they were going back to Schwytz.

‘You wish to go away from us already!’ said Mrs. St. Victor in an assumed tone of reproach.

‘My mother—’ Frank began to say.

‘Your mother does not expect you so soon. What did she say to you?’ was the interruption.

‘She wept so much that she could not speak. I think she will be anxious to see me again,’ was the trustful reply.

‘We are going to Basel to-morrow, and we cannot go without you,’ closed the conversation for the present.

Frank’s spirits sank rapidly. Catherine’s power over them was exerted in vain. He would speak of nothing but his mother, the goats, his playfellows, and the Hacken.

Mrs. St. Victor began to droop too. She had at one time long conferences with her sister; at another she walked moodily up and down her room. She paid no attention to the Rhine, notwithstanding its flow of famous waters and its flood of traditions.

The time came round when Frank must be told the truth. It was no easy matter. His tender love for his mother, and the natural pride and vivacity of his character, were not things to trifle with. In spite of all the confidence which fortune gives, Mrs. St. Victor felt that this boy was something formidable. It was not the boy, it was what she had to say, that overpowered her. To say to a child ‘You shall see your mother no more, because it is necessary to my happiness that you stay

with me,' is enough to paralyse any one, especially when the child is anything like Frank Miller.

In vain did she reflect on the fine cottage that was building for Lena. It brought no peace to Mrs. St. Victor to think of the poverty she was lifting Lena from. Generosity like hers, which deprived a mother of her boy, Mrs. St. Victor felt, deserved no thanks.

Mrs. St. Victor, it will be seen, was just at heart.

CHAPTER VIII.



MAN, solemn with a sense of his own importance and the greatness of his mission, called on Lena one day.

‘You are to leave this hovel,’ he said, ‘and to go and live in a house built for you at the expense of Mrs. St. Victor. Next spring you will be in possession of the finest flock of goats in the country.’

‘Leave the house in which Frank was born!’ exclaimed Lena. ‘To sit no more where I have nursed him on my knee! I cannot do it. I should feel as if I were running away from him. I often start at seeing him coming in at the door. Yesterday I convinced myself that I heard his voice. Not yet; when he comes back, we shall see.’

Mrs. St. Victor was duly informed of the reception her ambassador had received.

One morning she asked Catherine, in a mysterious tone of voice, to sit down and speak to her.

‘Can I count, without a moment’s hesitation, on your discretion and devotedness?’ was the puzzling question she put.

Catherine. I hope five years of faithful services have given you some reason to trust me, ma'am.

Mrs. St. Victor. Don't think me strange ; I do trust you. But it is a matter of such vast importance to me, and I know you can help me if you will.

Catherine. Your wishes have always been commands I have felt bound to obey.

Mrs. St. Victor. Frank is a very interesting boy. It was you who opened the door to him, and I know now why you did it. He is a poor boy. His mother is afraid he will take a fancy to be a guide. His father came to a sad end. I—I—I—wish—to—adopt him.

Catherine. So I believe, ma'am.

Mrs. St. Victor. Who told you ?

Catherine. Nobody. Nobody needs to be told, ma'am.

Mrs. St. Victor. You will see, then, the necessity of keeping it from him as long as possible, and of trying to get him to love me as his mother.

Catherine. I think I shall be as useful to you, ma'am, as any one can be ; but I should not like to be too confident. I don't think he will soon forget his mother. I am not so young, and I cannot forget my mother ; and I hope I shall never try.

Mrs. St. Victor. Help me as well as you can. Try and keep up the boy's spirits. Impress him as much as you can with the advantage to his mother as well as to himself of his staying with me.

Catherine. I shall do my best, ma'am.

In spite of the assurance which Catherine tried to

give, Mrs. St. Victor was no more than half satisfied. She even thought for a little of parting with Catherine. But could she expect another who would serve her better? 'Catherine is a good woman, and I know she feels attached to me,' she said to herself. 'I shall double her wages; she shall not want for presents, if they will secure her more faithful co-operation.'

Mrs. St. Victor dismissed all her other servants.

The greatest difficulty was behind. How was she to let Frank know that Basel was not the end of her journey, and that she expected him to go on with her? Frank was thoughtful as well as amiable, and herein lay Mrs. St. Victor's difficulty.

One morning Catherine told him that Mrs. St. Victor wanted him. This was nothing extraordinary, and Frank went to her, and his only concern was to see her looking so pale. She said to him in a sort of sob, 'Frank, do you love me?'

Frank. Yes, ma'am; everybody knows that.

Mrs. St. Victor. Would you not be glad to make me happy, and drive away all this gloom?

Frank. I would climb the Hacken with my eyes shut. I would go over all the Lowertz in the snow. I would—

Mrs. St. Victor. What I want you to do is much simpler. Will you be my boy?

Frank. I don't understand you, ma'am.

Mrs. St. Victor. Stay with me always, and call me mother.

Frank. I couldn't do that. I have a mother, you know; and what would she say if I were to call you mother?

Mrs. St. Victor. Listen to me, Frank. You know I lost a little boy; he was all my comfort. I wept for him every day till I heard your voice; then my heart found comfort again. Since that night my only thought has been how to get you all to myself, to call you my son, and to make you rich and happy.

Frank. My mother would never allow me to stay away from her altogether; she loves me too much.

Mrs. St. Victor. My boy, it is because she loves you that she has consented. Poor mother! she used always to be afraid that you would take a fancy to become a guide, like your father; and you know—

Frank. If my mother says I may, I will stay; but I must see her. You will let me go and see her?

Mrs. St. Victor. Here is your mother's consent in writing. I would not deceive you.

Frank. I don't think I can believe it till I hear her saying it.

Frank broke down at this point, and cried and sobbed quite like a boy of his years. It served no good end to try to console him with endearing names; his only answer was, 'I want my mother. How could she do it!

'Don't be harsh on your mother, my dear boy,' said Mrs. St. Victor. 'Parents cannot tell their children everything. By-and-bye you will understand how your

mother's love could do it. It needed all her courage to part with you. She has her sad thoughts, I assure you ; but the happiness which she knows is in store for you comforts her. And you will see her sometimes. There is such a nice house being built for your mother, and she deserves it ; and she will have it nicely furnished. Don't cry, my dear ; do put confidence in me.'

Whatever passed in Frank's young brain I do not know ; but a change came over him. He submitted. He got himself measured at the tailor's with apparent satisfaction. He took a deep interest in his new clothes. He seemed all at once to manage his pocket-handkerchief with more attention to appearances. Mrs. St. Victor was radiant.

'He will be a gentleman,' she said to her sister.

Mrs. St. Victor was now anxious not only to leave Switzerland, but to go on to Paris. Her main reason was, that Frank might forget his mother all the more readily in the midst of the hurry of the capital of France. She would have his education attended to. This would lessen the eagerness of the mountaineer's spirit within him. She would have him speak a more polished language. He would find companions of his own age, very different from those he had been used to. All this would make him forget home and cling to her.

Lena did not interpret Frank's smiles and apparent rousness at parting aright. She was less than just to his tender, warm affection ; and the news which was sent to her, that he did not weep by the way, was a

disappointment which almost wrung her heart with sorrow.

At home, abundance had succeeded poverty; but Lena felt a remorse very biting because of it. She had sold her son for it, she thought; at least she had allowed him to be exposed to dangers from which every good mother laboured and prayed that her children might be saved. What was all her fear about when she thought of him becoming a guide? She saw men returning in safety from the mountains every day. Frank might grow up a brave and honoured guide like his father, and not come to his father's sad end.

Other thoughts would relieve these, only to keep poor Lena in sorrow. The mother's pride would prevail a good deal, and she would say aloud to her four lonely walls, 'I know why the lady wished to adopt my little Frank. He is a beautiful boy. What a brow! What looks! Oh! my own boy!'





CHAPTER IX .

THERE is no place like Paris for turning people's hearts, if not their heads. Their very looks suffer. Old and young are transformed under its influences more certainly than were the victims of monstrous metamorphosis of ancient story.

Frank's curiosity was strong within him. The scene at Basel was before his mind during all the journey to Paris. But the sight of Paris and its gaiety put an end to his glowing memory of the scene. His curiosity had now a scope to which he did not try to imagine any limits. The beautiful streets were all avenues to fairy-land as Frank saw them. The houses, piled on the top of each other, were a realized impossibility to his ideas the day before. The cabs crossed each other, and so did the cabmen, as Frank judged from their mutually

daring looks. The fashionable promenades did not fascinate him any more than did the hurried, pointed, and occupied looks of the men of business. But the elegance of the former was a sight to see, and one which had never even threatened to dawn upon the region of his dreams. The ladies especially seemed to the young mountaineer a spectacle to produce dumbness. Lena's son had never thought such women, taken all in all, were possible.

Frank had already seen luxury in the way of hotel accommodation. His eyes had widened to their largest diameter when he was shown into the Swiss hotel at Lucerne. But it was only a hotel. Everybody who could pay might enter. But when he was told that Mrs. St. Victor could call this house, without any bounds endwise, sidewise, or upwards, or downwards, all her very own, that Mrs. St. Victor had lived all her life in houses like this, unless for the little time she went to Schwytz—it was a thing not to be believed, and yet there it was before his eyes! And all the details, the windows, for example! their heavy curtains of red satin, would be large enough to roll his mother's cottage up in like a parcel. The chairs, the cushions, the ottomans, the chandeliers, and the thousands of things Frank could see no use for, were the furniture of the very fairyland to which the streets were the avenues.

Frank tried, with a considerable sense of the risk of the experiment, to sit on some of the chairs. He measured himself along a sofa for a single venturesome

moment. He touched the bell-pulls as a blacksmith touches red-hot iron. And he counted all the golden nails in one of the arm-chairs.

In the meantime, a weighty question was being gravely discussed regarding Frank. It was not whether he should receive a first-rate education. That was settled long ago. But how was this to be given? At home, or at a public school? Miss Cadny advocated the school. Mrs. St. Victor was not at all of her opinion, and failed to see any force in her reasons. They were all based on the assumption that Frank needed the same sort of discipline as other boys. But there was a lurking reason in her heart which she had not force enough to drag out into the presence of her own just judgment. For Mrs. St. Victor was not, so far as she was alive to it, an unjust woman. The reason, unconfessed, was this: She had adopted Frank for her own pleasure, not mainly for his happiness. Was Mrs. St. Victor quite peculiar in this? It might be asked by any of us, how far an idolatrous love of any creature is not a subtle form of self-worship. It is true that our temptations are mainly from within. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. And it is pretty nearly true, that there is a great deal of self-love in all those phases of love which lead people into the doing of foolish and naughty things.

Accordingly, all Miss Cadny's good reasons were bad arguments with her sister.

Mrs. St. Victor thought it would be a good thing to accustom Frank to his new surroundings, before she committed him to the teachers she would engage to instruct him. It was to be a sort of preliminary civilisation. So she conducted the guide's son into a richly-furnished room, and called his attention to the fact that everything a boy of his age could need was there. And the utmost care with which experience and expense could be laid out had superintended the furnishing of this room.

'Claude will waken you every morning and help you to dress,' said Mrs. St. Victor to Lena's son.

'Waken me?' said Frank, and stared. 'I shall waken him and all of you.'

'My child,' said Mrs. St. Victor, 'You are not to leave your room before I say you are to come down.'

Frank nodded his head and said nothing. On the same evening Claude attended Frank to his room. When the wax candle was lighted, Frank said good night to Claude, thinking he had performed all the duties of his unnecessary office.

Claude knew his orders and said : 'I am to help you to undress, and to see that your clothes are not left lying about, sir.'

Frank stared at him and replied—

'Now you, sir, sit down and look at me. You may sit there and look till you are tired, which I suppose will be very soon; but if you touch me, I'll touch you. Do you think I have come to Paris to learn to put off

my clothes? Do you think that we don't know at Schwytz how to put ourselves to bed?

Claude was an honest, open-hearted young man from Savoy. He understood Frank in a twinkling, and next moment, himself and both his feet were in an easy chair. Frank began to undress himself, and the Savoyard looked on with a good-natured grin at an operation in which he knew there was neither mystery nor difficulty.

Conversation was cordial between the two in the shortest imaginable time. A knock at the door brought Claude to his feet, with the exclamation 'mistress' from his lips, and a knowing screw of all the features in his honest face. He retired. This was all the knock meant.

Frank could not sleep on that miserably soft pillow. He was too warm. He got up in bed, and, by way of mending matters, tossed his pillow out on the floor. This expedient failed to put him asleep. He rose, opened the shutters quietly, drew the blind, and looked out, and was glad to see the face of the moon. He met the moon like an old friend. It was the same moon as he knew in Schwytz. He saluted it, and the moon returned his radiant smile.

Frank must find something to do. So he twisted up the bed-curtains and window-curtains, and tied them together. He began to feel tired, and went back to bed. He lay for a little contemplating his room in the moonlight, and ended his occupations by falling asleep. Next morning brought hot water to his young



Frank began to undress himself.—Page 58.

master. He burst out laughing when he saw the curtains twisted like a cable and tied together. He undid them, and when he found he could not smoothe the crumples, he said, 'Mistress will be angry,' and then he added—

'This is your hot water, Mr. Frank.'

'What to do?' asked the young gentleman, all unconscious of anything wrong in the curtains.

'To thaw yourself and wash your face. The frost is bitter this October morning,' was the information supplied.

'You can take away your hot water along with yourself. It will do to boil the eggs,' said Frank.

'I am to help you to dress,' remarked Claude, but he made no attempt to begin.

'Help me to dress! Again I say, young man, sit down there and look at me. But I would not allow it at home. We don't put up with the rudeness of having people watching us when we are putting on our clothes in Schwytz.' This was Frank's acceptance of Claude's services.

Frank did not pour the water into a basin. He took up a towel and dipped a corner of it in the vessel in which Claude had brought up the water, and proceeded to wipe his face. Claude jumped up from the chair to which he had betaken himself and the heel of one of his boots, poured some of the water into the basin, and presented Frank with a large sponge.

'We use sponges for babies,' said Frank with considerable scorn. 'Catch it,' was the next thing he said,

and the game of tossing the ball was kept up merrily for a few minutes, till the dutiful valet induced his young master to apply the sponge to the purpose for which it was intended.

'It is not a bad invention after all,' said Frank, after passing it over his face exactly four times—twice each way.

Claude had to explain to Frank the meaning of the several objects on his toilette table. The nail-brush amused him immensely.

Claude succeeded in getting him up faultlessly. Mrs. St. Victor felt when he came down to breakfast that his appearance was an earnest of the realization of her fondest hopes.

But she said: 'Now my dear Frank is a young gentleman, and he is not to enter into conversation with his servant as he has been doing this morning. It is not proper. Gentlemen do not allow their attendants to say or do anything familiar. Be polite to them always, but anything beyond politeness is vulgar.'

'I thought Claude was an honest young fellow,' remarked Frank, who did not feel the reproof.

'Claude is honest,' replied Mrs. St. Victor. 'I should not have made him your servant if he had not been honest. But honesty in itself does not qualify a person like him to be the associate of a gentleman.'

Frank did not very well understand all that Mrs. St. Victor expressed, and he had no idea of what it implied. His only reflection found words in 'What a pity! we had some capital fun this morning.'

Catherine felt it her duty to tell her mistress of the state she found Frank's room in. Mrs. St. Victor went to look at it, and could not help laughing when she saw her curtains, so fresh and new the night before, twisted up into ropes. It had snowed through the night after Frank had left the window open. The floor towards the window of his room was covered with snow. The whole room showed the reign of disorder.

'Patience,' said the heroic Mrs. St. Victor to her own heart. 'This untamed nature shall yield to the subduing power of refinement. There are many such cases on record. The children of parents in whom all politeness has been destroyed, have often shown the true dispositions of their nature when unexpected circumstances have allowed them scope.'

Mrs. St. Victor spoke to her own heart very much the language of a person whose ideas about the order of human growth had somehow got turned upside down. But she did not know it, and she continued :—'Peasants have gone into the ranks of the army by conscription, and have risen to be generals. Numbers of men have advanced from humble life into good society by means of science. The arts have ennobled others who had been in the most needy circumstances.'

This question of original disposition, and the possibility of subduing and refining it if it happened to be a little savage, was new to Mrs. St. Victor. She had adopted Frank's face, figure, and natural kindliness. In these respects the guide's son was admirably gifted. Mrs.

St. Victor had a few lessons in human nature to learn, and Frank Miller seems to us, who now read her story, to have been appointed to teach her.

A room was set apart to be Frank's study. It was a surprise and a pleasure for him to behold; and he looked at it with pleasure and surprise.

A desk, maps, globes, class-books, and picture-books, or rather amusing and instructive books beautifully illustrated, were all there to make an accomplished scholar of him. Mr. Hall had a difficulty in getting him to cease admiring and to begin work. Robinson Crusoe and the pictures it contained rendered him utterly rebellious, and the helpless teacher had to send for Mrs. St. Victor.

To say that Frank's writing was bad would be to pay it a compliment; he simply could not write. But the sight of paper made him think of a letter to his mother. How was it to be folded up, supposing it was written? Claude came in, and Frank expounded to him his difficulty.

'Can you fold up a letter, Claude?' asked Frank.

'Of course I can,' answered Claude, busy sorting up the papers. In a minute or two Claude turned round, put a piece of paper quickly to his lips, laid it down, and, giving it a thump with the side of his close fist, said, 'There!'

This was to Frank only another proof of Claude's marvellous accomplishments. He did not know that Claude had taken one of his own envelopes. He had

never seen an envelope ; at least he had never taken any notice of such a thing. Frank was quite convinced that he understood Claude's worth better than Mrs. St. Victor.

The servants began to be fond of their extraordinary little master. They smiled at his good-natured blunders in matters of good-breeding. They knew he was generous. This was the politeness they thought most of ; and they were no further wrong in one direction than Mrs. St. Victor was in another.





CHAPTER X.

MR. HALL was an estimable man, and a good teacher. Frank very soon found the man out, and at once formed a very great liking for him. Mr. Hall soon understood the better side of Frank's nature, and said to himself that it was very good. He said to Mrs. St. Victor, that one year of private teaching would be all that Frank required, and after that he would be quite ready to go to a public school, and that it would be good for him to be sent.

Mr. Hall's affection for Frank, and his firmness with him, were all that the tenderest parent could have wished. But it was no easy thing to keep from allowing the hour of teaching to degenerate into an hour and a half of chatting about things far enough away from the lessons and the schoolroom. One day Frank told Mr.

Hall all about his own past history, and had the inexpressible joy of seeing tears in the worthy teacher's eyes. The conversation went on thus :—

Frank. I don't understand how I stay away from my mother. I like Mrs. St. Victor. But at night I always try to go to sleep thinking of my mother. There is not a house in all Paris like my mother's cottage. You know it is built of wood. The weather has blackened it a bit. It is perched up on the side of a mountain. There are lots of flowers in the summer-time. You must not think that it is always snow at Schwytz. Why is Schwytz so small on the map? If you only knew how fond my mother was of me ! •

Mr. Hall. Your mother has shown how she loved you. She has been willing to sacrifice her own feelings for your sake. She was, no doubt, afraid you would become a guide like your father, and be constantly exposed to similar dangers. As it is, you will never know what it is to want. Mrs. St. Victor will make you rich. She does not conceal her intention. And you have told me that she says it often to you.

Frank. Are all rich people always happy? Are they happier than I used to be with my white goat when I was at —

Mr. Hall. ^{He} with mother? There is no perfect happiness in this world, Frank. ^{My} boy. But riches secure a great many advantages to people who know how to use them. When you are asked to help a fellow-creature, it is not the possession of riches that hinders you from gratifying

the sweetest feeling in your nature, and assisting him. But the want of riches is, in this respect, a grievous poverty. A rich man can anticipate the wants of the unfortunate, and can lay his friends under obligations.

Frank. Then, perhaps, I shall be happy.

Mr. Hall. Perhaps so, Frank. But you know also that riches can make a man fatally forget every duty he owes to other people's feelings. He may, on the one hand, spend his money selfishly on his own pleasures, or, on the other hand, store up his money only to worship it, instead of the kind God who sent it to him.

Frank. I shall never be a miser. I understand now why my mother wishes me to be rich. But there must be different kinds of happiness. I am sure I was happy in Schwytz, and I am quite sure it was not money that made me happy. We used to manage, with a good deal of saving of the goat's milk, to get a small cheese, and it was the finest thing we ever had in our house. When mother had made the cheese, I used to stand beside her, and the sun would shine, and the lake would laugh,—the air was so sweet at these times! And I would look away up the sides of the mountain, and then at the sky. I was holding my mother's hand, and I know I was happy.

Mr. Hall. Yes, you were. That was the happiness of the heart. But you must be very thankful for all that Mrs. St. Victor is doing for you. And the best way to show that now, is to work hard at your lessons, and endeavour to find out what will please her, and do it. There is

the happiness of work, and the happiness of pleasing your benefactress.

These lessons were not given in lost time, even if the lesson of the hour was not said.

Frank's heart was glad now that he understood why his mother had let Mrs. St. Victor take him away so far from home. This had been a great mystery to him, and had caused him much concealed sorrow. He had even blamed her. He had such dark shadows flitting over his spirit at times as to question if he could ever forgive her. But now he saw clearly that the whole sacrifice was endured by his mother.

That evening there was a remarkable change in the conduct of Lena's son, and from next morning dated his intense application to work.

Mrs. St. Victor was puzzled. This lady's thirst for solace to her own heart had brought her into nearer contact with human nature than she had ever intended. It was Frank who was sending her to school.

Mrs. St. Victor was alarmed. She went to Mr. Hall, and said: 'I am very grateful indeed, Mr. Hall, for all the care you bestow on Frank. But do you not think he works a little too hard? Could you not check his ardour considerably? I don't wish to make a great scholar of him. I am afraid he will assume the grave and grim airs of a member of the Academy. I cannot permit him to follow pursuits which will estrange him from me. You understand?'

Mr. Hall did understand, but not in Mrs. St. Victor's

sense of the process. He saw now clearly that it was Mrs. St. Victor's aim to add one more to the number of cumberers of the ground, and that Frank's fine nature was to be sacrificed at an altar built for the worship of a woman who had bought him for the purpose. Society was to be cheated out of one more of its good gifts. Mr. Hall was deeply affected. Walking through the garden of the Tuileries, his hands and features betrayed the inward surgings of his thoughts ; and he said half aloud : 'No, madam, I will not suffocate this young life. I will not trample out the sweet sparks of intelligence which dart from the living work of God. In a year Frank shall read Lucretius. The next year he shall commence Greek, and you will know nothing of it, madam. Poor boy, clip his wings indeed ! No ! no ! madam, I register an oath in heaven.'

Mr. Hall, it is perfectly apparent, was not the tool Mrs. St. Victor needed, and yet it would not be quite true to say that she wanted a tool. She was only ignorant.

Frank's application to his studies gave Mrs. St. Victor no occasion to complain of failure in respectful attention to herself. She presented him with a purse, and all the pieces it contained were gold. Frank's countenance reddened with pleasure when he knew that he could do with it as he pleased.

'Can I give it away if I choose ?' he said to Mrs. St. Victor eagerly.

'Without a moment's doubt,' said Mrs. St. Victor. 'But you ought to buy something with it to please your-

self. I don't think it would be very wise to give it all away.'

'Shall I get more when this is done?' asked Frank, with darting eyes.

'Are you not my son, my heir?' asked Mrs. St. Victor in answer.

Mrs. St. Victor loved the sound of these words even from her own lips. She often complained to her sister that *ma'am* seemed to come from Frank's lips more readily than *mother*. And Miss Cadny liked Frank all the better for it, but did not say so. She only lifted her eyes to heaven when her sister spoke of it.

Frank was visibly getting civilized. He gave over yawning in the drawing-room. He did not munch his bread, or take a big bite out of the side of an unpeeled pear. His hair was more in order, and his hands were not so red. This last mark of refinement had cost Mrs. St. Victor much anxious solicitude. •

It was now time to provide Frank with a dancing-master. He would require soon to go into the company of children born to all the inheritance of manners, which Mrs. St. Victor was at such pains to impose on him.

When Mr. Hall had just gone one day, and Frank was inspired with the good man's most recent exhortations, Mrs. St. Victor came into the room, and kissed his brow with great tenderness, and said—

'You will receive a new lesson to-morrow, and I hope you will attend to your new master.'



Frank sang the Ranz des Vaches.—Page 72.

'A lesson in German,' said Frank, thinking of what Mr. Hall had just been saying of the beauties and the power of his native language,—'the language we speak at home'

'I was not thinking of German, but you shall have lessons in German,' said Mrs. St. Victor, slightly carried away with Frank's enthusiasm.

'I shall say my prayers in German, and sing the Ranz des Vaches,' glowed out in all its incongruity from Frank's heart.

'Sing it to me,' said Mrs. St. Victor.

Frank sang the Ranz des Vaches. His voice was an instrument of pure melody.

'I did not know of this treasure of a voice before,' said Mrs. St. Victor to herself. 'If only his manners were more perfect, I should take him out at once to meet children of his own age. But I must get Mr. Slight, the dancing-master, to do his best.' Then she said to Frank: 'Your new lesson to-morrow will be one of more immediate importance. I have engaged Mr. Slight, the eminent dancing-master, to teach you how to walk, to enter a drawing-room, to meet people generally, and to dance.'

'Teach me to walk?' said Frank, who still had some of the savage in his nature. 'I have been able to walk for some years now. I am not afraid to meet anybody nor to enter any room I care to be found in. And everybody dances at home, but I never heard of a man to teach such a thing.'

‘But the manners of Paris are different from those of Schywtz—’ began Mrs. St. Victor.

‘It seems so,’ interrupted Frank.

‘And we have rules here for everything, and the observance of these rules constitutes a young man a gentleman, and qualifies him for good society,’ was the rest of Mrs. St. Victor’s reply.

Frank was looking at his own feet with interest all this time, and wondering what it was to walk by rule. He determined to consult Mr. Hall on this difficulty. Mr. Hall had become one of the necessities of Frank’s existence.

When his teacher arrived next day Frank asked him all about the rules.

‘They are ruled by their rules, these slaves of an ever fleeting phantom,’ had escaped Mr. Hall’s lips before he had time to recollect the reserve he had laid on himself regarding Mrs. St. Victor’s notions, and the exactions of society in the more soulless stages of human decay.

‘I thought I could walk,’ said Frank. ‘I know I can dance. And I did not know I had to learn how to meet people.’

Mr. Hall was of opinion that a dancing-master could not improve upon the works of God in Frank’s natural accomplishments, and was almost saying as much, but he only said—

‘There are certain usages in this world to which those whom God has gifted with reason must submit. This

Mr. Slight will not teach you much you do not know, or cannot do ; but it is as well to be aware of what the world calls good manners.'

This did more to conciliate Frank to the unnecessary Mr. Slight, as he regarded him, than that jumping gentleman ever found out, or could himself have managed.





CHAPTER XI.

MR. SLIGHT was a dancing-master all through his nature. After hearing that he was to get a new pupil, his spirit knew no rest till he had seen him. Now Mr. Slight must not suffer injustice from this remark of mine. His anxiety was not, whether the pupil would actually come, and thus constitute the expected fees a realized possession. Any dancing-master could have easily proved himself Mr. Slight's rival in this respect. His apprehensions were all in the interest of his pupil. His fear was lest there should be any pre-established impossibility of discharging all his nature-improving functions. Here again, I say, don't do Mr. Slight any wrong on account of my statements. He was utterly unconscious of professional diffidence on every point but one. And that was the height of his pupil. Mr. Slight was not a little man. But he always found it difficult to get a

pupil to look up to him who was taller than himself. And in order to his giving any work of the Creator's a few finishing touches, he felt that he required the vantage position of looking down upon it.

Frank was not of colossal height, and for this Mr. Slight was thankful. He took him in hand with confidence, and a comfortable anticipation of success. He made him sit, stand, touch the floor with his toes and heels, turn out his toes, and all the other operations necessary to economize the energies of nature, and concentrate them on the production of his kind of beauty in motion and form.

Frank managed not to laugh, and Mr. Slight did not notice either his grimaces or his grins. He had one fear upon him. Mr. Slight's hands were of formidable size. Any rude contact with those might hurt.

Mrs. St. Victor sat through the first lesson, and was in ecstasies about Frank's docility.

'Hold up your head, sir. Arms straight. Feet out.' These words were uttered by Mr. Slight with a learned solemnity, utterly unapproachable by Mr. Hall, when he taught Latin grammar.

'Ready for society in six weeks,' was Mr. Slight's announcement to Mrs. St. Victor at the end of the first lesson.

This was satisfactory to Mrs. St. Victor.

Frank had a deal to tell Claude when he got home.

Claude proposed that Frank should let him see all the master had made him do.



Mr. Slight taught by example.—Page 78.

The next lesson was intended to supple the joints. This was Mr. Slight's second lesson to all pupils. Mr. Slight taught by example.

Frank made a discovery at this lesson which was of great use to him ever after. Mr. Slight's joints had a way of creaking when he lifted his limbs, and Frank kept time by this signal when his master was behind him.

Mr. Slight's fiddle was very small, and he drew the bow across it with such ferocity that Frank was in perpetual fear of its being crushed and bruised into splinters. The music produced by this process upon such an instrument was so shrieky and squeaky that Frank was inclined at one time to hold his ears, at another time to explode with laughter ; but Mr. Slight's gravity seemed always imperturbable. There was no time wasted during the hour that Mr. Slight was paid to occupy with teaching. The various exercises were so run into one another that none of them seemed to have either beginning or end ; except, of course, that the first lesson had a start, and the last had to come to a stand at the end of the hour.

When Frank came home from this second lesson, he was beginning to put himself through a process of self-analysis, and was asking himself how much he liked this sort of thing, or rather, how little he disliked it, when Claude's manner attracted his attention.

Claude requested him to teach him all he had learned. He seemed to be in earnest. It was evidently no request made for the fun of the thing. Neither it was, as Claude explained. The young Savoyard had suffered a revolu-

tion in his social ideas. At all events, the make of Mr. Slight—form and feet and hands and all—had seriously affected his previous high estimate of the elegance of dancing-masters, and he knew how much society owed to these gentlemen. At least, he thought he knew.

There was no objection in Claude's form and limbs, as far as he could see, to his advancing to the honours and emoluments of this high office, if only he could do the thing. And having the fine opportunity which now presented itself, he resolved not to let it slip. Frank was pleased with Claude's request. He did not think much about his ultimate aims. He taught his servant fully, as well as Mr. Slight taught him. And he gave him money to buy a fiddle. The fiddle was bought, and for a week these two juveniles and their movements had a good deal of mystery around them.

One night, however, when Claude was bounding and dancing like a young fawn, Mrs. St. Victor came in upon them. She had on her night-cap. Claude sprang out of the room at the sight of the spectre. Frank understood the situation in an instant. He saw that Claude's dismissal was already resolved upon. And he knew how to avert it. He said—

'Don't be angry, *mother*. Claude is not to blame. It was my wish.'

The word *mother* coming from Frank's lips drew tears of joy from Mrs. St. Victor. It also secured Frank's victory. She kissed Frank, called him her own son, and did not entertain another thought about dismissing Claude.

Mrs. St. Victor scarcely slept that night for joy, that Frank had of his own accord called her mother.

Frank's sorrow was sincere and deep. This was not so much for the deception the word was meant to cover, but truly and simply because he felt that he had allowed another to hear even the word he loved so much, because it expressed his tender sense of duty to his mother.

'*My* mother! No! I told a lie! She is not my mother,' Frank was saying this to himself, while Mrs. St. Victor was exclaiming,—

'At last! He has said it! Henceforth he will always call me mother.'

Frank told Claude the next day that he had nothing to fear. He added however, that they had better discontinue the lessons for the present.

He also resolved to mention his difficulty to Mr. Hall. It was a case of conscience, and if Mr. Hall had known all its meaning, he might have treated it more seriously. As it was, he merely said—

'In calling Mrs. St. Victor mother, you have not failed in any duty to your mother. It was merely an act of complaisance. And I think all the more of you for your good sense.'

But Frank felt that it was not true, and besides, he knew there was a touch of deceit about it. And for the first time in his life, he did not agree with Mr. Hall. Mr. Hall, as we know who read the story, was not in possession of all the facts. And Frank was only a boy, and did not understand Mr. Hall's reasons.

Time went on, and Frank began by and bye to show in his person and manners that Mr. Slight's trouble was not lost, nor were his attempts at improving him in vain. At the end of two months, Frank's strut was quite to Mr. Slight's satisfaction. The great finisher pronounced Frank ready for society. A children's ball was now to mark, in Mrs. St. Victor's memory, one great step made by Frank towards being a gentleman.

At first, this ball was to be a children's party, and nothing more. But, by a singular concurrence of ideas among the mothers, it blossomed into an assemblage of costumes. And the study of the historical dresses of periods and countries became for a time something quite engrossing. So also did the study of ways and means to many of the mothers. This latter study was not necessary to Mrs. St. Victor. She had more difficulty with Frank. He could not see the necessity of being dressed in any out-of-the-way fashion. When at last he did see it, he perplexed Mrs. St. Victor again by saying, with an air of final resolve—

‘Well, I shall dress as they do at home.’

Mrs. St. Victor's idea had been to get him up as a marquis, with sword and powdered wig. But Frank refused to be made a fool of. His refusal was expressed. The reason he kept to himself. He was improving in worldly wisdom.

Mrs. St. Victor ordered a suit such as Frank demanded. After she saw him dressed in it she ascribed to him an amount of foresight and a sense of the

fitness of things, both of which Frank was all unconscious of, and would have said so had Mrs. St. Victor spoken to him on the subject. But, leaving reasons and previous motives out of account, in point of fact his native costume served remarkably well to show off the natural elegance of his figure. The light blue vest, and the long round-tailed coat of the same colour stretching down to his knees, leaving the bright brown garters which tied the snow-white stockings full in view, were very striking. He had on a brown necktie, and loose knots of ribbons were displayed on his vest. His shoes were edged and ornamented with blue. Unfortunately his hair had been shorn of its flowing locks. But a black hat of spacious brim and ample upward fold, and crowned with flowers, with a long staff, completed his picturesque costume.

The young Swiss peasant entered the drawing-room of a real duchess. Every line of grace in his figure was shown to advantage. The thickness of the carpet did not deaden the thud of his staff. Mrs. St. Victor was almost beside herself with joy.

This assemblage of gorgeous costumes was a revelation to Lena's son. It had an effect upon him which the discerning reader will have begun to expect. He was a little ashamed of his native attire, and regretted that he had despised the sword and wig.

He had every reason, however, to feel grateful to Mr. Slight. He took his part in a quadrille faultlessly. He did not, however, come so near to perfection in the

angle at which he set his feet when he was only standing. Mrs. St. Victor noticed this, and she saw that some of the young people did not overlook it. Still she kept her delighted eye upon her idol. Sometimes she would signal approbation, sometimes reminders, or even remote disapprobation. She even once whispered a word in his ear. Frank was all attention. He had begun to like the sort of thing. He was now eager to become an irreproachable result of Mr. Slight's training, and he thought within himself that this end was not far off.

CHAPTER XII.



LAUDE was sitting up to hear from Frank all the news about the ball. And Frank detailed his pleasures minutely.

Claude. Well, Mr. Frank, you used to say you wouldn't go into society of the sort ; but I think you like it well enough now that you have broken the ice.

Frank. It is best to be like other people. And I was very much amused, I assure you. I should so like, Claude, to take you with me to a ball like this one.

Claude. Me ? Do you say so, Mr. Frank ? No ! I shouldn't like it. I have given over finding pleasure in flying kites. And, to tell you the truth, I have only one thing in view—and that is, to get hold of some money, and go home to my mother. The money would do to help my sister to marry our neighbour, big Thomas Brown. I should then grow plenty of potatoes to live upon. Nobody is rich in Savoy.

Frank. Is that the sort of country it is ?

Claude. Well, nobody I care about. I was only a poor boy. You are all better off in Switzerland. But,

at the same time, there is only one Savoy in all the world.

Frank. What are you thinking so seriously about? You stand quite still, like somebody asleep on his feet.

Claude. I am tiring you, Mr. Frank. Good night. Sound sleep to you.

Frank. You don't tire me at all. And I am not in the least sleepy. Why did you leave Savoy and come to Paris, Claude?

Claude. God has been kind to me. I was taken away from home by an agent of chimney-sweeps. After we came to Paris, the night before I was to be engaged by a master sweep, I dreamt that I was sent up a chimney, and that I stuck in it. I tried to cry. I was choking. And when I got up next morning I would not take the job. I don't know yet how I got out of their hands. I fairly ran away. The sweep was very unwilling to let me say No. But he durst not altogether force me. So I got out of his hands. I heard him saying I looked as if I could mount like a monkey. You don't know how sad it is, Mr. Frank, to see poor children taken away from home to be made sweeps of. Some of them cry so, that they have to be almost forced.

Frank had to remind Claude that it had struck two. He gave him five shillings to himself for sitting up. Mr. Frank's sleep that night was not very sound. He had a strange visitation of sweeps, and monkeys, and young marquises; and the sweeps had on powdered wigs, and

the monkeys had swords with diamonds in their hilts, and the marquises were brandishing sooty brushes. He then saw them all joining in a riotous dance, and they seemed to get into a turmoil of some sort about something serious that had gone wrong. And then a bell rang in awful tones the two strokes, which told that it was two hours beyond midnight. A tall Swiss peasant came in, brandishing a long staff, and banished them all away but a sweep and his monkey.

Next morning Mr. Hall felt seriously annoyed, for the first time, at a want of attention in Frank, which he could not explain on any principles of reason or of the volatility of natural boyishness. Frank seemed this morning as if all his tastes had undergone a transformation. At first Mr. Hall took no notice of what he saw clearly enough. He thought a little patience, and a concession or two to uncontrollable waywardness would reduce Frank's disturbed spirit to order. Mr. Hall had no reason to boast to himself of his success on this occasion.

It may as well be said, that Frank had ceased to be home-sick. No longer did melancholy find relief in tears, or both work themselves into a resolve to run home all the way to Schwytz. Frank had gained a social success or two. He was now ambitious to be a fine gentleman. His mother was, however, still first in his heart, notwithstanding all this change. But the cottage and the Hacken were always banished as intruders, when they presented themselves to memory.

Lena was lonely at home. She felt every day how far Frank was from her. His letters were like sunbeams to her spirit. She always read them to her friend Dolly White.

‘But a word from his mouth would be sweeter than a hundred of these,’ Lena would say to Dolly, holding up the letter to affected scorn, after they had read it and conned it from all imaginable starting-points.

Lena was very proud of the letters she received from Paris. But her letters did not awaken feelings altogether similar in the mind of her son in Paris. They were untastefully folded. Lena had not got into the way of using envelopes. She did not write the address either neatly or correctly. So they caused Frank to feel certain uneasy sensations just at the moment of their delivery. These sensations, however, sent up only a passing cloud. Frank read his mother’s letters over and over again, and laid them by under lock and key among his dearest treasures. And if any real grief of heart assailed him, he betook himself to his mother’s letters, and he always found consolation in them.

Mrs. St. Victor did not neglect Frank’s religious and moral education. This lady omitted nothing on his behalf which she could see to be within the widest horizon of duty. Frank had not repeated the fond salutation of ‘mother.’ ‘Patience,’ said Mrs. St. Victor to herself, ‘the guide’s son will grow up under my auspices to be a gentleman worthy of the fortune and the future I destine for him.’

Mrs. St. Victor set too high a value upon her own power to influence the destinies.

I have felt a certain dislike at confessing what both the reader and I have been aware of for some time. And that is, that Frank was in some danger at this period of his life of settling down into a fop. The truth is, he was a very ridiculous boy now, and he did not know it. He did not even suspect it. He was too ridiculous for that. It was, however, Mrs. St. Victor's doing. And neither did she know or suspect the truth. Her eyes were in all directions after the newest fashions. She made a study of novelties, and put her adored Frank forth as a faithful weathercock to tell the most subtle breaths of change in the fashions.

Frank was at first surprised and puzzled with this incessant change of clothes. He got used to it soon, however, the more especially as they were always new.

Mrs. St. Victor took pains to instruct him in the important significance of the knot of his necktie. It was a long time before she could intrust Frank himself with the sacred duty of producing this complication of folds and pulls. At last, perfection was reached; nay, perfection was surpassed in Mrs. St. Victor's esteem, for Frank himself could knot his necktie perfectly.

One day he observed that Mr. Hall's cravat was anything but irreproachable, and he felt it his duty to call his teacher's attention to this glaring fault. Mr. Hall had borne too much by this time. He took up the matter

in earnest. And after a few words on the beauty of order in general, he denounced the man or boy as unworthy of the light of the sun who could spend more than a minute in tying his cravat.





CHAPTER XIII.

MR. HALL loved Frank tenderly. The process of decay going on in the goodness of Frank's soul was to him the occasion of many a groan. His thoughts upon this subject so engrossed him as to double his outlay on cigars.

Mr. Hall fortified himself in the general conclusion, that patience was the most necessary of the Christian virtues. He resolved not to see the obtrusive fact, that Mrs. St. Victor was rendering her pet a ridiculous and offensive puppy. He loved on against declining respect. Indeed, he tried to prop up his respect for Frank with the constant reflection that it was not the boy's fault.

Frank, in the meantime, was not all lost to himself. His affection for his master had never been so deep as it was now.

Many boys are most unamiable and disrespectful towards their teachers. In their eyes the teacher is one of their father's hired servants.

Poor boys! They never learn that a teacher is a benefactor. They never experience his power of introducing them to the best society. The parents of the boys are often as foolish as they are. A broken-down man of fashion has still some value in the eyes of this class of people, if he can get them introduced to his former haunts. The teacher introduces to the master-minds of all the ages.

Frank had no general philosophy of education to guide him, but he loved Mr. Hall.

Things were in this condition: Frank was being made a fop. Mr. Hall saw it and grieved, and resolved to save him by faithful love. Frank's affection for Mr. Hall increased. At this juncture Mrs. St. Victor fell grievously sick. She seemed to forget everything, and all the people about. She even forgot Frank. Many of my readers will think that a worse thing might have befallen this young gentleman.

Miss Cadny and Mr. Hall agreed that this was an opportunity, not to be missed, of getting him boarded in a public school. In two days plans and enrolments were complete, and Miss Cadny let Frank know what was decided upon. She did this with unaffected tenderness, and Frank understood it.

Frank had long before this discerned the weakness under the warmth of Mrs. St. Victor's nature. He had

also seen much to confide in beyond the cold of Miss Cadny's character. He listened to her announcements with respect, and his whole mien expressed obedience. But when Mr. Hall began to say something about the new arrangements, Frank's eyes filled with tears.

'I shall miss you very much, my dear Frank,' said Mr. Hall, knowing that these words expressed exactly Frank's thoughts regarding him.

'Shall you?' asked Frank diffidently.

'I shall indeed. But I must forget my own feelings and think of your good. It is best you should go to school,' were the words of wisdom in reply.

'Do you think so?' said Frank confidently.

'You will think so by and bye, I know. After you have learned to know something about yourself and other boys; when you see your own defects and their excellencies, you will be much happier. At least your happiness will have a surer foundation. Meantime, you do not understand these things.' These sentences were addressed by Mr. Hall, half to himself, half to Frank.

'And I hope Mr. Hall will go and see you sometimes. Indeed he has promised to go often,' added Miss Cadny very kindly.

'You may be sure I shall, ma'am; and if I may be allowed, Frank shall come and dine with us sometimes. Mrs. Hall will be delighted to make his acquaintance, and since my little Arthur is about eight years of age, he and Frank will not be very dissimilar in years at least.

Frank only wept under all this propect and proffer of kindness.

Next day at ten o'clock he said good-bye to Catherine and Claude, and set out with Miss Cadny for school. Miss Cadny's coldness seemed to Frank to be the very warmth of tenderness to-day. She chatted with him, and looked at him in a way as new as it was pleasant to him. Her words of endearment touched him much more sweetly than Mrs. St. Victor's ever had.

They arrived at the school; and when Frank was introduced to the head-master, he thought how unlike he was to Mr. Hall. After some formal talk, the great master passed him on to another master, who had to attend to details about food, and uniform, and dormitories, and all the innumerable little things of large importance which are usually attended to by ladies in our country. This second master was a much more important functionary in the eyes of the boys than the grave and solemn Mr. Forman, the head-master. Mr. Hynde was the name of this lions' provider. Mr. Forman issued orders only about books and lessons. Mr. Hynde had exclusive, and, as far as the boys ever saw, sovereign sway, over balls and foot-balls, marbles, chocolate, barley-sugar, and all sorts of food. The nearest approach he made to lessons was when he supplied pencils and slate-pencils. Mr. Hynde was an administrative genius. He understood perfectly how to make his subjects feel their entire dependence on his kindness. He would let them know how he had to run over

all Paris for something nice and new. He liked to see his good things tasting sweetly. All gulping of them, and gorging greed, he abominated.

This made him a favourite with all the parents and guardians. And even boys with ill-regulated appetites and tastes respected him.

Mr. Hynde always looked his best and most beneficent when a new boy came. Frank was informed that Mr. Hynde was charged to pay him his pocket-money. Mr. Hynde hinted to him that he was not to be backward in letting him know if anything did not please him, and he would change it.

Miss Cadny had given Mr. Hynde a sovereign in the meantime for Frank's pocket-money, and after kissing the boy tenderly, she left him in this new sphere of his existence.

Lena's son was taken into his class-room, and sat at a desk between two boys.

'Look at my bird,' said one.

'Will you have a glass?' said another.

'Oh! it is only sirop,' he added, seeing Frank look suspiciously. 'We are all very jolly in here.'

This conversation was in sage undertones. The master, at the high desk, kept looking under his spectacles, and over them, and occasionally through them, in whatever direction he heard any noise.

At dinner Frank was rather pleased than otherwise with the simplicity of the food. They have a custom in public schools in France of appointing a person to read



‘ Will you have a glass?’—Page 94.

aloud during the meals—dinner especially. Frank could scarcely eat for fear of missing the sense of what was read. The boy next him, however, guessed his embarrassment, and said, 'Oh ! never mind him. He only reads to keep us from talking.'

Frank wiped up the last streaks of gravy on his plate with a piece of bread. This was done with a sense of liberty redeemed. Mrs. St. Victor had forbidden it the first day he dined with her, and Frank had never enjoyed it since that day to this. But this day he did enjoy it. It was what his mother taught him to do in Schwytz. What would Claude have said if he had known that his young master dined every day, and all week, with the same spoon and fork, without their being once polished up ? Thanks to the original instincts of Frank's nature, and to his large endowment with the faculty of observation, he soon and easily fell into the ways of life at school.

After dinner Frank, or Miller as he was now styled, astonished 'all the school by the swiftness of foot he owed to the place and circumstances of his birth. At the game called prisoners'-base no boy could escape him. He made six prisoners in less time than their best runner, before he came, could have made one.

Frank's reputation was made at once. It was the greatest in living memory on the play-ground.

He found the class-room at school a very different place from the study at Mrs. St. Victor's. He must not talk now. He must attend. Mr. Hall was not his

teacher ; this was the difference Frank felt most. He once or twice began to talk, but the shout of 'silence' sealed him up hermetically.

A new boy had to pay entry-money in the school Frank was sent to. The money was not paid to the boys. They only shared the sweets it purchased. The money was paid to Mr. Hynde ; and he put almost his own price on the article, always of eating, which he supplied for it. Mr. Hynde had let all the boys know that they might expect plenty of something nice from Frank, for Miss Cadny had left more than twice as much pocket-money as was usually supplied the first day. And this was always understood to go for entry-money's worth.

Mr. Hynde smiled when Frank and his followers trooped in for the great bargain he meant to let them have. An immense cake cost only eight shillings. Mr. Hynde said it was ruinous to sell it so cheap. Other eight shillings were soon eaten up by varieties. There were a good many boys, you must know, and it took the last four shillings to send them all out into the playground with something to eat in the hand or pocket of each. Never was a new boy's name shouted with such plaudits as Frank's. Till the latest talk of the boys that evening, Frank's praise was loud on their lips.

Next morning Frank was the first to bound out of bed. He had not eaten to hurt himself. It would have seemed strange to Mrs. St. Victor and Claude, that he could dress with so few things on his toilette-table.

But we know Frank a little better than they did. The truth is, he felt that now his liberty in dressing himself was restored or recovered—he did not try to determine which.


The uniform of the school was a thing after Frank's own heart. The red stripe down his trousers, the belt, and the cap, seemed to him the perfection of taste.

Mr. Hall did not fail to visit him. He learned and saw with emotions which the boy did not discover, and could not have understood, that the better nature, which had been pretty well buried under Mrs. St. Victor's care, had forced its way up out of its temporary grave. His heart was gladdened also by observing how deep was the sentiment of gratitude in Frank. His earnest concern for Mrs. St. Victor was very apparent.

The session wore on, and Frank had ceased to be a new boy. He was in course of time duly interrogated regarding his family, fortunes, and antecedents. When it was known he was a Swiss boy, this was very interesting.

'Are your family rich?' was asked, as boys will ask, and expect an answer too.

'We shall be some day,' was the reply. Frank did not like the questions he was thus exposed to. He was sad over this last answer. One boy's father was a colonel; another's father was a mayor. 'Why had I not the courage to say, my father was Frank Miller, the guide, and I am now the adopted son of a rich lady, who has promised to make me her heir?' This is what Frank said to himself.



Mr. Hall had promised to invite Frank to dine at his house some day. The much longed-for day came round, and Mr. Hall arrived before the appointed hour. He went with Mr. Hall in his uniform of course. On the way to his house Frank called and saw Miss Cadny, and inquired after Mrs. St. Victor, who was still very ill. Miss Cadny was kind and tender. Claude and Catherine adored Frank in his uniform. All the servants admired him.

Frank took away his Swiss album with him to let Mr. Hall's children see it. On the way he mentioned to Mr. Hall his trouble about the equivocation he felt he had been guilty of regarding the wealth of his family. Mr. Hall comforted him by saying that he had stated the truth so far ; and as he was not in circumstances in which it was his duty to tell everything, he thought he had answered rightly. Besides, the boys had no right to the information, and they would only make a bad use of it if they had been supplied with it.

Frank understood Mr. Hall this time.

Mr. Hall lived up four storeys in Ulm Street. Mrs. Hall was a fine woman of about thirty years of age. Arthur, their eldest son, was eight, Henrietta was five ; and as the younger members of the family were not present at dinner, Frank had no chance of judging of the ages of either of the two. Henrietta gave Frank her hand when they went in to dinner. It was the month of December. A fine warm chop was brought in as the one comfortable dish for dinner. A servant girl was the only waiter.

Arthur helped to change the plates, and Henrietta claimed the privilege of handing round the bread. Mrs. Hall spoke a great deal to Frank, and seemed to take a kindly interest in his mother. Altogether, this family circle presented life to Frank in an aspect as pleasant as it was new. He had known poverty and great wealth; but here was neither: it was the comfort of the great middle class. After dinner, Arthur and his sister showed Frank all their toys and picture-books. Frank took a deep interest in them. He showed his Swiss album, and they were in raptures. The peaks covered with snow were wonders everlasting to little Henrietta.

A walk in the Botanic Gardens added to the pleasures of this happy day; and in the evening Frank returned to school with his pockets full of things to eat, and his heart overflowing with gratitude.





CHAPTER XIV.

THE day after this happy visit, one of the boys in the school proclaimed a notable discovery he had made.

‘You don’t know,’ he said to his school-fellows, with the intention of immediately dispelling their ignorance,—‘Miller is only a Swiss goat-herd. A rich lady who has no children adopted him. His mother lives in a wooden hut. His father was a guide, and fell over a precipice. They had nothing at all to live on. Now then !’

This exciting news flew from ear to tongue, and from tongue to ear, till it reached the ears of Frank. It was not long till he was duly interrogated.

‘What is your mother’s name?’ asked one of his school-fellows.

‘Lena Miller,’ was the ready reply.

'Your other mother's?' was the further inquiry.

'I have only one mother,' answered Frank.

'Her name who keeps you at school?' was explanatory.

'Mrs. St. Victor' proved satisfactory, for the youthful inquisitor remarked—

'A capital name! Lots of money. You will be jolly and rich. No wonder you had so much entry-money. Plenty more to spend. Eh?'

Frank did not know where to hide himself. He blushed and crouched. It was a diversion in his favour that a stray dog got into the middle of the playground. The boys all joined in a rush after it. Frank was left standing alone. He did not know to what hand he should turn. Just then a boy came up, and rather timidly taking his arm, said—

'Never mind, Frank! They did the same to me. They never let me alone after they knew that my father was a joiner, and that my godfather kept me at school. They called me joiner for six months. I used to keep crying. But one morning I threatened to join two of their heads, and they were a little less impudent. Since then, I have beat them in the class, and I am able to lick them in the playground. So they are quiet. And I am sure you could do the same. Let us be friends.'

'I am only a poor boy, Verny,' said Frank, quite openly.

'So am I, Frank. But I am going to be an architect, and you are going to get a fortune. So when you are

rich, you order a house and I build it. But in the meantime, don't let these cowards bully you,' responded William Verny.

'You will come to Switzerland some day, won't you, William? We shall go to the very top of the Hacken. You will see my mother. Our cottage, wooden hut and all as it is, will have room for us,' said Frank.

'I should like,' replied his friend.

These two boys were now in a dangerous mood for bullies.

Never had a visit been so much longed for as Mr. Hall's was now. And happily he did not disappoint the eager expectant. Punctuality was one of this excellent man's many virtues. After all the kindly greetings were over, Frank told Mr. Hall, with an apparent sense of suffering, all the reports that had been going. Frank expected to produce a very serious impression upon his confidant, but he was soon corrected both in this expectation and in his own undue estimate of the evil which had befallen him.

'It does not seem to bother you?' he said to Mr. Hall.

The reply was :

'Why should it? There is nothing either dishonourable or mean. You have not been trying to make them believe you belonged to any family but your own?'

'Not I indeed,' said Frank, bristling up all at once.

'Then there is nothing to bother about,' said Mr. Hall, in a tone of conclusiveness. 'The affair is simple

enough. They know your position in life now. Let them see your rank in the class. If you were born to work, let them see how you can work. He must be a brave boy that William Verny. I should advise you to make a friend of him. You two can do a great duty in behalf of all the others. Make yourselves respected and loved. It will do them all good.'

Frank was comforted, and took courage.

CHAPTER XV.



WHEN Mrs. St. Victor began to get better, her first inquiry was about Frank. She was pleased that he had been taken away during her illness, but she expressed her determination to bring him home again.

Miss Cadny made no objection, but as little did she seem in any hurry to attend to her sister's wish in this matter. Mrs. St. Victor saw this, and did not ask her either to go or to send for Frank ; she made up her mind to wait till she was able to go herself.

Thus it happened that Frank remained two months longer at school ; and Mrs. St. Victor felt that it was something heroic on her part to bear his absence so long. The examination was drawing near. Frank's success had been remarkable. Mrs. St. Victor thought she might as well let him finish the session at school. She was very proud of the prizes Frank was to get. She forgot that he never would have been within reach of them if she could have helped it. Frank got much real good at this public school ; but no part of the thanks for this is due to Mrs. St. Victor.

Frank thought he had now won his right to the grati-

fication of one of the dearest wishes of his heart. That was, to spend his holidays at home and with his mother. Mrs. St. Victor could by no means be brought to see this. Miss Cadny was leaving Mrs. St. Victor to go to her own home. Frank was told he was to go with her.

'You will find all the amusement you wish at my sister's house,' said Mrs. St. Victor a little shortly.

'My mother will not be there,' replied Frank, and a cloud passed over his fine brow, which Mrs. St. Victor did not fail to observe. She added—

'Mr. Hall will come and spend a few weeks with us. I am going myself.'

Frank assented, and began to prepare. His only further remark was, 'Next year I shall go and see my mother.'

Miss Cadny's home was not as large as a castle, but it was a fine, moderately-sized house. It was built near the bank of the Garonne, between Bordeaux and Langon. Mrs. St. Victor did not like it. She had tried hard to get her sister to part with it. It was no exponent of their fortune. But Mrs. St. Victor's arguments did not tell with much force on Miss Cadny.

This lady could not forget that this was the house in which she had been a child. The surrounding country was in her eyes the most beautiful in all the earth. The Garonne, broad and quiet in his flow, had an ever-living charm for her. The vineyards, which rose up in the form of an amphitheatre on the banks of the river, the steamers dashing past, the sails of both pleasure-yachts

and loaded boats, were always new to Miss Cadny and charged with fresh delight.

Frank looked forward to a long journey when this visit was to be accomplished. He thought he had offended Mrs. St. Victor a little in the way he expressed his wish to go home. He tried to make up for it in little attentions, and did not fail.

The sight of the Dordogne caused inexpressible joy to Frank. It was a fine lake according to him.

When they reached Bordeaux, Frank kept Claude busy. They ran round the harbour. They crossed and recrossed the bridge for the mere gladness of heart it caused. Frank felt as if there was a good deal of room in the world after all.

From Bordeaux to Langon everything was picturesque. All the world smiled on Frank. This country was something to astonish him. Hitherto he had thought there was no country to compare with his own Switzerland; now he found that there was wider scope for his admiration.

There are features common to all the beautiful aspects of nature. Perhaps Frank was admiring Switzerland all the time he was looking at the lovely scenes of France. He had travelled far from Paris, and he had the feeling that he must be nearer to his mother. The Hacken and the Lowertz were before his mind, whatever lake or mountain he might be looking at. His home, and his mother, and his mountain, and his lake, moved everywhere with our young mountaineer.

Miss Cadny showed the tenderest affection for Frank. Mrs. St. Victor did not like this. Even her sister's felicitations to him about his success at school were displeasing to Mrs. St. Victor; but she tried to conceal this feeling. She had some faint idea that it showed weakness.

The efforts the ladies made to entertain Frank were rather unnecessary. A child of the mountains, with his vivid recollections of Switzerland, needed only the river's bank, the broad horizon, and the blue sky to amuse him. He thought carriages were invented only for old people and invalids. To waken with the morning, get a stick in his hand, and set out for a long walk with Claude, were the keenest joys to him.

Two years had worked wonders in the manners of Frank. He was now in all outward respects a fair representative of a gentleman's son, and a young gentleman from school. There were, however, features of his face which Lena herself would have said were unchanged. His look was as lively, resolute, and gentle, as it had lived in her memory since he left her. There was also a firmness in the way he put down his feet by which she would have known him.

One morning, Frank and Claude walked further than usual, and came up to a farm which had every appearance of great general comfort. A very pretty girl was busy milking the cows. All at once Frank forgot what a fine gentleman he was. His coat and vest were hanging over Claude's arm in a twinkling. He



went up to the girl, and, in a tone almost suppliant and quite sincere, asked to be allowed to help her. She laughed at his nonsense, as it seemed to her. At last she consented, knowing that the cow she was busy with was a gentle creature, and would not kick the handsome young stranger. At all events she would hold it; and Frank set to work, and began to sing the song which women in Schwytz hum to themselves when similarly employed.

The milk-maid and Claude gaped with wonder both at his handiness and his song.

After filling the pail, Frank thought he would like a drink of the frothy sweetness. The girl had read true and trustworthy histories of kings and princes who disguised themselves like peasants, and she had no doubt that one of the finest of them had come her way this morning. She ran into the house, and selected the finest glass on the shelf. She brought it out clean and clear, and she gave it to the young gentleman, whom she now regarded as a Spanish prince.

Claude was thinking his own thoughts this morning. They ran thus when put in words:—‘These trifling attentions of mine will be well paid some day. What a pity it is he has gone to school! It weakens our intimacy. Before he went the house was gay; now I must always be as stiff as a poker, and turn my tongue seven times before I speak. I feel it more fatiguing than hard work.’

Frank was now eleven years of age. At that age no

boy is very unapproachable. But Frank had been taken from a mother and a home he tenderly loved, and his memories affected his manners. Boys at his age are not usually given to reflection. Frank reflected much. He tried to render a reason to himself for every new thing that struck him.

At this particular time his thoughts were all running after Mr. Hall. It was with great impatience that he awaited his beloved teacher's arrival. Mr. Hall could answer every question he put.

At last the day arrived which was to bring Mr. Hall to Miss Cadny's. Frank went to Langon to meet him, and brought him back in triumph.

Miss Cadny was almost as much delighted as Frank to see Mr. Hall. Her new guest would come to the rescue in her arguments with Mrs. St. Victor about the best arrangements for Frank. Mrs. St. Victor was well and obstinate again, and Frank's education was in danger.

Now, however, Miss Cadny knew all would be left to Mr. Hall's decision. Mrs. St. Victor had no opinion of her own in his presence. She left all educational arrangements entirely in his hands.

One thing displeased her in Mr. Hall at this time. She thought it was not gentlemanly to carry a book the way he did when he went out for a walk. Nay, she had actually come upon him and Frank lying reading under the shade of a tree. This was not proper according to Mrs. St. Victor. It flurried her considerably. Gentlemen should never look so engrossed.

One day, at breakfast, Mrs. St. Victor astonished all the table agreeably by an unexpected proposal she made. She said, 'Should I be trespassing on your kindness, Mr. Hall, if I asked you to accompany Frank on a short journey?'

'Any journey you may propose, ma'am, and the companion you name, are two of the greatest pleasures to me,' was Mr. Hall's reply.

Frank said, 'Oh, delightful! to go on a journey with Mr. Hall.'

This was another of the young gentleman's mistakes. It showed too much excitement; and Mrs. St. Victor did not think he should have spoken at all. Frank saw all this in her looks, and added—

'You are so kind, mamma, to think of a journey for me;' and going over to her to embrace her, Mrs. St. Victor's wounded heart was healed.

'I wish Frank to go and see one of my relations,' said Mrs. St. Victor to Mr. Hall. 'It is Miss Nordyn. She lives near Condom. You might pass a few days with her.' Mrs. St. Victor had many things to enjoin on Frank in reference to this visit. 'He must be very respectful and attentive to this old lady. She was peculiar. For forty years she had accustomed herself to Miss Kell, her attendant, and the two lived in the closest intimacy. She could not bear any noise.'

'I am afraid I shall be a trouble to her,' said Frank honestly; 'why go at all?'

'I wish her to see you ; the visit is quite necessary,' was the reply.

Frank put no more questions. He thought no inconvenience could occur so long as his beloved master was with him. He prepared for the journey.





CHAPTER XVI.

MISS NORDYN lived on her ancestral estate in Gascogne. She prided herself on not disturbing the handiwork of adorning Time on the appearance of her house. The masons and joiners had built it well. That was enough for Miss Nordyn. No noise of carriage-wheels had ever profaned the approach to her house since she held sway. The baker and the postman were the only beings who drew near to it. The latter brought a newspaper more frequently than a letter.

Miss Nordyn took a walk every day for half-an-hour. This walk was always limited to an avenue of ancient ashes, and was never indulged in apart from Miss Kell, who fulfilled the twofold duty of general servant and lady's-maid to Miss Nordyn.

Miss Nordyn loved her mother-earth with passionate devotion. Gascogne is a dry and parched land. Miss

Nordyn did not see this, and would not believe it. It was a case of slander in her eyes. That avenue of ashes was very like the port of Toulon she thought. A few meagre poplars were the finer masts. Every day did she admire the avenue from this point of view, and tried hard to induce Miss Kell to see it, as it was quite plain to her.

Miss Nordyn had planted a garden herself. It was after the English style she said. Every plant and every flower therein were of the rarest description, and were nowhere else to be seen in such perfection and beauty, according to this ancient conservatrix of her own traditions.

Miss Nordyn never could see the necessity of travel. See the world ! She could see the world at home. Look at her garden and that avenue.

Miss Kell listened, and did not contradict. This was the very wisest course she could pursue.

Miss Nordyn heard she was to receive a visitor. It was rather a bother on the whole. She knew her niece had adopted some boy or another. The useless piece of ceremony of sending him to see her would require to be put up with.

Politeness required, however, that her guests should be made comfortable ; and Miss Nordyn piqued herself on her politeness. So she gave Miss Kell orders to see that all due preparations were made.

An old man named Leonard, who sometimes did odd jobs for them, one day announced that he saw a car-

riage labouring up the hill. Miss Kell had to go out and report upon the report. She confirmed it.

Now, it must be understood that Miss Kell was not sorry. However much she tried to identify her habits with those of her mistress, still she loved to see other human beings, to hear their voices, and to get one of them as a partner at cards.

Miss Kell, therefore, had the double feeling of pleasure and of convenience in seeing two strangers enter the vestibule of their time-adorned mansion. She opened the door of the carriage to the great disgust of Leonard, who did not know that he might ever have another chance of performing this duty to any human being in a real carriage.

Miss Kell led Frank and Mr. Hall into the dining-room, to take their dinner by themselves. Miss Nordyn could not think of altering her hour of taking the principal meal of the day. And that was a sort of dinner or supper at half-past seven to a minute.

Mr. Hall, who knew nothing of Miss Nordyn, thought it strange to dine by themselves while the head of the house was in the house, and was in no way disabled or disqualified to preside at her own table. But he resigned himself to the inevitable. The table was well served. Leonard was a sort of ancient footman ; and, although he was lame, he hobbled about wonderfully.

The travellers had little to say, so that, in spite of Leonard's cough, they had no difficulty in overhearing the mistress and the maid in conversation.



Miss Nordin was sitting in state.—Page 118.

‘I shall perhaps write to my niece,’ was the reply.

Mr. Hall granted himself a license almost to laugh when he was out of the old lady’s presence. To-morrow seemed to Frank to be a long time to come.

‘What a gentlemanly boy!’ exclaimed Miss Kell in the hearing of Miss Nordyn.

‘Unfortunate old woman that you are, Miss Kell! You are a scatter-brained girl in your old age. What a blessing for you it has been to be all this time under my watchful care! Are you going to fall a-courting this brat? It is surely enough in the way of ancient females being foolish that my niece has done so much for him! I have no wish to co-operate with her to his ultimate destruction. He has taken on fine airs already. He kissed my hand like a young marquis!’ This was the reply of the self-approving oracle.

Mr. Hall and Frank took a walk within the prescribed bounds. The evening was a long weariness to Frank. Mr. Hall, not knowing whether he might smoke, felt it most prudent to deny himself.

The next day was wet. Miss Kell was of opinion that they should not set out—at least not so soon as they wished to depart. To the great regret of Frank the hour was altered till a later one in the day.

Again the tutor and pupil found themselves walking within prescribed bounds, the former miserable for want of a smoke. It began to hail. They stood inside a door for protection against it. The storm became terrific in two or three minutes. It lasted about five

minutes, and at the end of that time there was not a leaf left on the trees. Mr. Hall had never witnessed the like. There was a sort of quagmire of leaves on the ground all around.

Such sudden airquakes are quite common in Gascogne. And they create overthrows and disasters unknown in other parts of France. On this account such a thing as a farmer is not to be found in the country. Those who cultivate the ground are a sort of dependent tenants who halve the profits when there are any, and starve when there are none. You would search the country in vain for such households as those of the farmers in Normandy.

Mr. Hall and Frank took a long walk to look round at the destruction caused by this whirlwind and hail. They passed a miserable hovel in which they saw a wretched woman all skin and bone, and four starved benumbed children staring in stupefaction at her.

‘No bread this winter, and four children!’ she said, in answer to the looks of Mr. Hall and Frank.

Frank at once gave her a sovereign. She looked from it to him in a bewilderment of gratitude. She soon bestirred herself to put it to proper use. Frank was at once in an overflow of projects to help all such poor people.

When they returned they were surprised to learn that Miss Nordyn had expressed a wish to see them. Frank’s astonishment was in no way allied to gladness.

Miss Nordyn asked them what they had seen in their

walk. Mr. Hall told her about the poor woman and her children.

'We are used to that sort of thing,' said the old lady.

'But the poor children cried so !' said Frank.

'Oh ! my young master has got quite the ideas of a marquis ! Wonderful work of my niece ! But while you are here you will be as good as keep your money in your pocket to buy buns and sweeties with. Don't corrupt my tenants,' was a speech which amazed the generous boy. Frank expected Mr. Hall to say something. But Mr. Hall could not trust himself to reply. They both wondered how she knew what they had been doing. Miss Kell was wroth. That day passed in scowls and silence. And in the evening the lady's-maid did not allow the lady to win a single game at piquet. The training of forty years seemed all lost on Miss Kell by the events of that day. Miss Nordyn was disturbed with a sense of the ingratitude of the lower orders.





CHAPTER XVII.

THIS visit taught Frank many impressive lessons. Such hardness of heart towards the poor and the suffering he never had dreamed of, and would not have believed in had he been told. The determination to be disagreeable to Mr. Hall and himself, notwithstanding all their efforts to please, puzzled him. Mr. Hall observed his wonderment. He did not say anything to add to the shock received by Lena's son. He laid prudence and charity to his heart and lips. He called Miss Nordyn's conduct eccentricity. He attributed to age and solitude all her oddities.

Frank felt an amount of tenderness for Mrs. St. Victor after this visit which he had never been aware of before.

Miss Nordyn wrote to her niece. Her letter grieved

Mrs. St. Victor. And the reader shall judge of it for himself. This is it:—

‘NORDYN CASTLE, *August.*

‘MY DEAR NIECE,—I have seen your brat. He will do for a clown. But why I should have seen him at all is beyond my weak powers of understanding. Was it to give me some lessons on the proper treatment of my people that you sent him? The youth has ideas wild enough indeed. They are what people call liberal, and no mistake. I advise you to retrench a good deal, that he may have all that he will feel it necessary to gratify his great ideas with. The savings you will thus effect will not embarrass him long. I hope you and Miss Cadny are well. I remain, my dear niece, your loving aunt,

HERMIONE NORDYN.’

Mrs. St. Victor was mortified with this letter. Well as she understood her aunt, she did not expect this. But, as always happens in similar cases, the letter overshot itself a long way. It was meant to awaken aversion for Frank in her mind. She never loved him so much as now. And when Mr. Hall gave her a simple and faithful account of all Frank’s conduct in the trying circumstances of the visit, her love became more tender still.

The holidays were not yet over, but Mr. Hall determined to spend the remainder of them at home with his family. The separation was all the less painful that

Frank knew he would soon see his beloved master again. But it was a sorrow to Frank notwithstanding.

It was not at all necessary that Mrs. St. Victor should invent amusements for Frank at Langon. But she tried it nevertheless.

It was apparent that her Swiss boy was fond of travelling. Mrs. St. Victor thought she would take advantage of this to make him forget school and its associations. She accordingly proposed to Miss Cadny to come along with her and Frank to Biarritz, adding that a change of air would do her good. Miss Cadny did not feel that she needed any change of air.

Frank was more favourable to the proposed journey. He wanted to see something more of the sea. He had heard Miss Nordyn's account of Toulon. Was there anything in it? Could there be? Frank wished to see for himself.

They accordingly set out in a steamer. This special steamer was selected by Frank. He was in a sort of rapture during this voyage. He got up on the paddle-box. For a time he reflected on his good fortune in being allowed, by Mrs. St. Victor's kindness, thus to mingle with the sons of the rich; but by and bye this reflexion tired him. He began to think of Switzerland and his mother—his own mother. He said to himself—'How I shall run about when I get home again. I shall get a knapsack on my back, and a stick in my hand, and go and see every place. But I shall never stop long away from my mother. How happy she will be in her

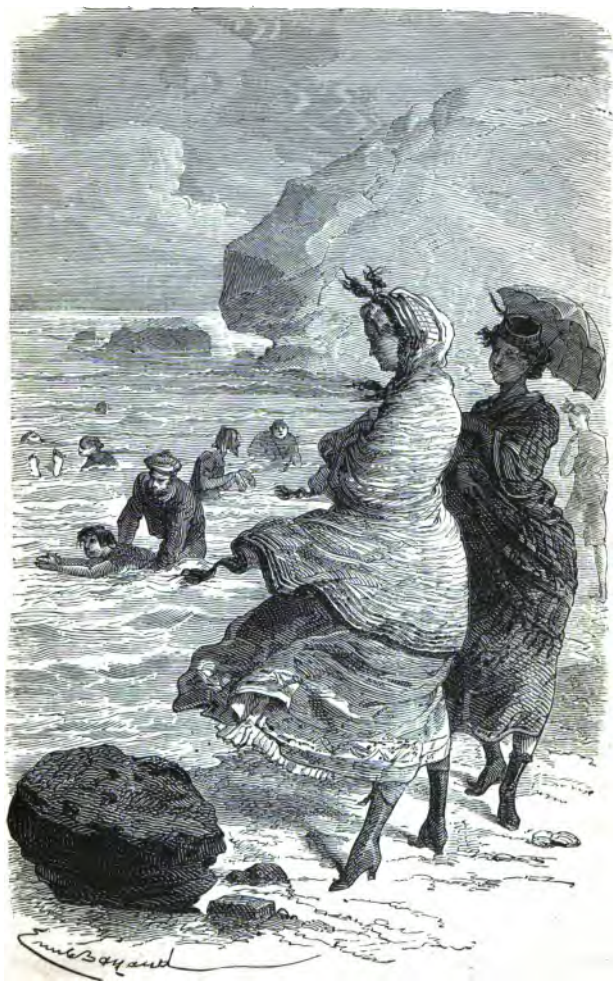
new house when I am there, and when we have more money than we had before !'

At Bordeaux more passengers came on board, and they too were going to Biarritz.

At Bayonne Frank was charmed with the accents of the Spanish language which the people spoke. He felt as if he were in a new sphere altogether. This was being of a truth in a foreign country. He looked at, listened to, and took a note of everything.

The journey from Bayonne to Biarritz is a matter of less than an hour's time. When they arrived Mrs. St. Victor took possession of apartments in a hotel which had been bespoken for her. While things were being set in order, Frank took a run down to the sea, and along the shore.

The sea was blue like the sky. Frank wondered if the same azure produced the blue colour in both. He had a theory about the rocks. They were set in that irregular fashion to check the bold advance of the waves, and to dash them into foam. He looked closely at the sea-foam. From its colour he thought it might have some particles of silver in it. He was ravished. He was at the same time considerably out of the reach of scientific accuracy. He mystified the mysteries of azure, and rocks, and foam, very considerably. His intellectual mill did not make much of its grist. But it had begun to grind at something. It had begun to run at all events. And the work it did was about as valuable as that of anybody else, at a similar stage of intellectual progress.




He was taught to swim—Page 129.

Frank had hitherto thought the sea was a lake, like the lakes of Switzerland. But now he saw that it was something a deal more grand. If any one had told him this, he would have stood up for the lakes of his country. As it was, he believed the testimony of his eyes.

When he came back to the hotel, and was telling Mrs. St. Victor of the wonders of the sea, she asked him how he would like to bathe in its azure ?

It would be difficult to convey to my readers a reason for Frank's emotion in answering this question in the affirmative, if they have not been at Biarritz. If they will go there on as early a holiday as they can find it convenient, they will understand my diffidence, and indeed despair, in this matter. Anything more picturesque than the houses perched on those rocks, looking out upon the sea, is not to be witnessed by the eyes of travellers. There are three beaches, called respectively, the Old Harbour, the Fools' Beach, and the Basque Beach. They give Biarritz a peculiarity of aspect which equally delights experienced tourists and children at the coast for the first time. There were numerous bathers when Frank went down next day to acquire this new knowledge of human life. But it is not too much to say that no bather, old or young, felt anything approaching the enthusiasm of his happiness.

After the sensations of this great delight were to some small degree appeased, Claude and Frank roamed about the whole day. The clock which struck at luncheon time was unnoticed by Frank. The dinner bell had but



slight authority that day. The beauty of the country all around was bewitching. He was perhaps not very fully aware of the reason. But the truth to tell, he saw home through it all. And his mother was at home.

Day after day Frank plunged into that beautiful blue sea, along with the other young people. He was taught to swim.

Mrs. St. Victor's heart seemed to bound with a delight as full as his own. This lady's experiment upon herself by means of Frank seemed to herself to be thus far successful.

The walks along the beach were a great additional delight.

A month of the purest pleasure of their lives passed over at Biarritz. And it was now time to think of returning to Paris. The boy seemed to be daily in such a state of delight that Mrs. St. Victor hesitated to mention it to him. But when she had mentioned it, and he consented, the excellent lady was plunged into other difficulties. The return to Paris meant to Frank the end of his holidays, and work resumed at school. This was not Mrs. St. Victor's plan at all.

On the evening before the day they were to set off, Mrs. St. Victor and Frank were sitting on the beach. They looked at the sea for a long time, and listened to its delicious murmur. Frank broke the silence, taking Mrs. St. Victor's hand and saying,—

‘What delightful holidays you have given me! What beautiful countries you have taken me to! I shall work

mentioned Frank's unaccountable aversion to being privately taught.

Self-interest is a mighty power. A sense of it is very nearly everywhere present. Mrs. St. Victor knew this, and took it into account in calling on Mr. Hall. She hoped his own interests would incline the tutor to her views. She certainly meant to pay him well, if he could succeed in altering Frank's views, and would undertake his duties as private tutor again.

Mrs. St. Victor never was so much amazed in her life as when she heard what Mr. Hall had got to say. He gave her a harangue, which painfully tested her patience, on the advantage of public school-life to a boy of Frank's disposition. There were, no doubt, Mr. Hall reasoned, temptations at school which a good mother shuddered to think her son exposed to. There were trials which a tender mother dreaded when she thought of them. But the evils of merely private education were of tenfold more mischievous a nature. The boy never measured himself against other boys. His pride was fed. His vanity was blown larger. He grew up an unmistakable coward; and yet he was brave enough to be impudent. He never could acquire the humility of knowing his own weakness, nor the happiness of a personal acquaintance with his own strength.

Frank, according to Mr. Hall, was a boy gifted with intelligence considerably above the average; but he needed emulation to bring out what was best within him.

Mr. Hall tried to soften the conclusion he knew was so hard to Mrs. St. Victor, by reminding her that the honour of Frank's distinguished career at school would be amply shared in by his benefactress.

The point was gained. Mrs. St. Victor saw there was nothing for it but to yield; and Lena's son went back to school. He made a rush at William when he arrived. He told him all the pleasures of his holidays. He did not conceal from him the difficulties which had been put in the way of his return to school and all its joys. Frank thought of only joys at school at this early stage of the session. The remembrance of the happy holidays he had had did not gather a cloud of gloom over the school, as it often does with boys as good as Frank.

'Where did you spend your holidays, William?' asked Frank.

'I stayed at home,' answered William. 'My father was so pleased with my prizes. He told me I was the great comfort of his life. He was equally proud of my certificates. He got them framed, and they are now hanging up in his own room. He says he needs to look at them every day. I enjoyed a good deal of leisure for drawing, and even painting a little. We had a walk in the country every Saturday. I fished sometimes; and I dined twice with my godfather, who gave me a sovereign. I was very sorry to leave the country. You know, Frank, I am very fond of the country. But I cannot say I was sorry to come back to school.'

There was no time for Frank to reply to this long

This was quite unexpected, and Mrs. St. Victor changed the subject.

'If Lena dies,' she said, 'you can take her house into your own possession till you hear further from me.'

'I hope she will not die if she sees her boy,' remarked the disinterested agent.

Mrs. St. Victor had a few friends with her that evening. The trouble she was apparently in after her return from this interview was silently accepted by them as a reason for retiring shortly after.

Left alone, another struggle commenced in the depths of her spirit.

'Will Lena die?' she said to herself almost unwillingly; 'then Frank will be mine, without an opponent to claim him. Will he love me more? I cannot tell. He will be mine altogether.'

She called in the stranger, and asked him in great detail about Lena's illness.

'She did not begin to sink,' said he, 'so long as she had a hope of seeing her son Francis again; but latterly, madam, this hope has faded, and Lena has sunk very much.'

Here is another enclosure of the lists for a tournamental strife between good and evil.

'Shall I refuse to let him go?' asked Mrs. St. Victor at her own heart. The answer did not come. By and bye it began to come, and it ended in a thundering 'NO!' and she thought she heard the echo of 'Would'st thou slay the mother?'

The victory was complete ; Mrs. St. Victor triumphed in the routing of the forces of evil. She said to the visitor,—

‘Poverty is such an affliction ; I thought that to deliver Lena from it would console her for the absence of her son.’

The next day Frank was brought home. It was not judged necessary to alarm him before he could be got ready to start for his mother’s home. When he saw the agent, he knew him, and a strong sense of fear seized Frank, which expressed itself in the convulsive question,—

‘Is my mother dead?’

‘Oh no ! my dear boy,’ said the agent ; ‘but your mother is ill, very ill. In an hour we start to see her.’

‘Why so long as an hour?’ asked Frank in an agony.

Mrs. St. Victor had got everything ready that she thought would be of use or comfort to Frank on the journey. The parting was so tender, that it comforted Mrs. St. Victor’s heart for some time after he had left.

It was now three years since Lena had seen her boy. The questions which the solemn man tried to answer on the way told of his great patience. But his power was less than his patience, for it entirely failed in all its attempts to distract Frank’s attention from his mother and her illness.

The journey proved to Frank fearfully long ; but it came to an end as all journeys, whether in sorrow or in joy, do.

Frank's former companions in raids and excursions would have found it difficult to recognise him now. But older people are more used to see the sameness which continues under growth and change in youth. So, when the two travellers hired a carriage at Brunnen for Schwytz, the driver knew and saluted Lena's son with all the cordiality of an old acquaintance.

In the good town of Schwytz, as in a great many good and small towns, the people have their joys and their sorrows in common. Kindness and gossip are the results of this community. Heroic mutual help and scandal are its two extremes.

Lena's illness was an affliction to everybody. It was the great sensation of the time. When a carriage drove up the street, they knew that it must be driving with something in it for Lena. Frank stepped out and paid the driver handsomely. He smiled with all his old kindliness at so many well-known faces. The people saw he had not forgotten them, and his manner said that he had no wish to forget them.

Frank stepped into his mother's cottage with a heart in violent agitation.





CHAPTER XIX.

FRANK'S hand trembled as his heart beat, when he was opening the door which was to disclose to him so much of gladness or grief. So far well. The old wooden rack, the little window, his mother's bedroom door, confirmed no forebodings of evil. After a moment's hesitation, he opened this door, and Dolly White was there, and told him to come forward. Lena was on the bed. She looked pale and thin. She called him Frank.

Frank concealed his emotion. He dissembled his sorrow at seeing his mother so terribly changed. He stood in an attitude of reverence, as if praying for her blessing. He kissed her wasted face tenderly. He held her feverish hand in his. Neither of the two said a word. They looked at one another. They understood each other.

When their hearts were reduced to calm, the faithful

Dolly felt she might leave them a little. She went to speak to the excellent man who had gone all the way to Paris for Frank. She told him what the doctor had said last. He had begun to hope, if only Frank would come. Now he was come, thank God !

Lena left alone with her son, found strength to speak.

‘I must not die,’ were her first strange words. And yet, why think them strange ? Were they not a symptom of life recovering its hold ?

‘You will get better, and we shall be happy,’ was Frank’s reply ; ‘but,’ he added, ‘you must not excite yourself.’

Lena seemed glad to obey this sweet voice. She looked at her son’s face as if she could wish to read there all that her heart desired to know. Her face flushed. She turned pale and trembled. Then she said,—

‘Are you to leave me again ?’

‘Not till you are better ; and I shall come back again,’ was the considerate reply.

This reply, and the promise it conveyed, were better for Lena than the doctor. The doctor was the first to make this remark when he heard of it.

Four days later, great good news gladdened the hearts of all Schwytz. Lena Miller was getting better.

Dolly continued to nurse her, and Frank did all he could to help.

Lena’s first efforts at conversation with Dolly were about how tall, handsome, and charming Frank had become.

Frank was not forgetful of his duty to those he had left behind in Paris, and whose hearts were so full of him and his concerns. He wrote to Mrs. St. Victor. He wrote also a long letter to Mr. Hall.

Lena was astonished at how quick and how beautifully he could write. She signalled to Dolly to mark it, and Dolly's admiration was as emphatically expressed by looks and nods as it was great.

Mrs. St. Victor waited with ardent impatience for a letter from Schwytz. This death! She could not allow herself to wish it, or to think that she wished it. But if it did happen, she would certainly regard it as a wonderfully special providence.

Claude was ordered to look out for the postman, and to bring at once to his mistress any letter that might come from Schwytz.

The letter came, and Mrs. St. Victor told Claude to deny her to strangers for the next hour. The envelope was not in mourning. Mrs. St. Victor glanced her eye over it, and then sat motionless. Lena was not dead. Mrs. St. Victor did not know what feelings now held her in possession. Frank's letter brimmed over with love for his own mother, and respect, affection, and gratitude for her. Mrs. St. Victor replied at once. She did this in defiance of certain evil feelings she was aware of in her heart. Her letter was in the same spirit as Frank's.

The postman came often to Lena's cottage with letters for Frank. This helped forward the process of her recovery. It gladdened her heart and cured her

ailments. She was cheered with hearing Frank reading letters from Mr. Hall and William. Frank was proud of his friends. And Lena's soul rejoiced to think of him as the object of so much respect and affection.

Is not this a wonderful case for the medical faculty to study? Here was a mother who was certainly dying. Her disease was a low wasting fever. The cause of this disease was the absence of her son. The cure was his return. The completion of the cure was the sight of his face, and the hearing of the respect in which he was held by good people. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained praise. Out of the mouth of this son He ordained to a mother health and cure.

Frank had plenty of money with him. This was due to Mrs. St. Victor's forethought. The doctor had been very sparing in the expense to which he had put Lena hitherto. But now he felt that she might be allowed many a little comfort as he called it. He ordered, and had conveyed from Lucerne at once, a fine easy-chair for his patient. Lena was afraid of it when she saw it. She was sufficiently well now to think of the expense of such a chair. She thought it looked as if her recovery was going to be something not good enough for the price.

As his mother got better, Frank used to go out for an hour or two, and have a talk and a walk with some of his old companions. They had grown like himself, and neither did he patronize them, nor did they bow to him any more than they took any undue liberties with him or his open purse.

Lena seemed after a time to show a tendency to relapse. Her smile ceased to shine. It was there still, but it was sad. Frank read his mother's looks as he could read a book.

'You are tormenting yourself about my having to leave you, mother,' he said one day, and Lena felt that he knew her thoughts. She replied,—

'I have sinned, my child. One day or another will let me feel the full extent of my punishment. I feel that I am guilty. I did not trust in God. I trembled at the thought of your becoming a guide. It now seems to me as if you would be as safe on the mountains as the chamois. You would escape every danger. You are so strong and active. I am punished already.'

'Don't talk of punishment, mother,' said Frank. 'I don't very well know what you mean.'

'Mrs. St. Victor knows. She now possesses the happiness which I so sinfully parted with,' was the reply

'Mrs. St. Victor has nothing that ever was yours, mother,' said Frank. He looked sorrowful as he continued to say, 'I owe much to Mrs. St. Victor. We both do. But I do not owe her the heart that is yours. I am not quite sure that, if she had it, she would value it so highly as she now thinks she would. Mrs. St. Victor does not show much capacity of enjoying her possessions. She is good to me. It is my duty to love her, and I do my best. But you are my mother.'

Now this speech will astonish my readers as much as it consoled Lena. It shows Frank to have been a keen observer. It lets us hear how well he could put his observations in practice when occasion required. Lena had never allowed herself to be convinced that Mrs. St. Victor meant to provide for Frank all his life. The reason for this is complex. There are, first, the limited ideas of such liberality which all the poor possess. Ideas never transcend circumstances. The rich no more understand the poor, than the poor comprehend the ways of the rich. The lavishness implied in such a life-long provision for a poor boy who is no relation, is a thing not easily conceived by people in Lena's circumstances. Another reason was a sort of jealousy. Lena felt it hard to part with Frank. But it was worse to feel that another was providing for him, and not her own heart and hands. Accordingly, her next remark was,—

‘What do you mean to do, Frank, when you grow up?’

‘I don't know,’ replied Frank gaily. ‘I work hard enough as it is. I shall never need to work harder, whatever I may have to do. Mr. Hall always tells me that people who are well-to-do ought to work as if they were not. I have read a good deal about people coming down in this world. All the advantages I possess are due to Mrs. St. Victor. Without her I should be differently clothed, and should not have attended school. I am in her hands so far. I work hard, and I hope I shall always work hard.’

‘Have you seen the house Mrs. St. Victor has got built for me?’ asked Lena.

‘I saw it in passing,’ answered Frank.

Lena said : ‘I have not been able to leave this little cot where I lived with your father, and where you were born, and where your father last knelt in prayer for us both—last when I was beside him.’

Frank felt in no hurry to return to Paris. Mrs. St. Victor wrote to him to remind him that he was running some risk of losing his chance of a prize. This was touching Frank on a tender part. But he seemed not at all roused to action by it. Another feeling had possession of his mind. Did duty not call him away? This question was one which his mother had more reason to dread than any put by Mrs. St. Victor. And his benefactress had nothing to hope for but Frank’s own answer to it.

CHAPTER XX.



LENA was better, and able to be out and about. It was at the beginning of April. The mountains were still covered with snow. But their looks, under the bright rays of an April sun, wore the smiles of summer rather than the frowns of winter. The mountains had laid aside their diamonds and put on their emeralds and rubies, according to Frank. Nature had burst the chains which winter had fixed upon her. A new life of vigour was everywhere in joyous activity. There seemed to be a charm in everything, and Lena felt it.

She told Frank she wished to go up to the church, and give thanks to their merciful Father in heaven for her recovery. Frank had been thinking of the same thing; but he thought of taking his mother to the church of the Hermit at Einsiedeln instead of their own little church in Schwytz.

There were two reasons for this in Frank's mind. The one was, that he thought the drive would do his mother good. The other was, that he had often heard her speak with great pleasure of visiting the larger and more distant church in company with his father.

Lena was charmed with the proposal after she became convinced that the drive would not be ruinously expensive. Frank asked his friend, who had come to Paris for him, to take a ride with them. The kindly old gentleman solemnly consented. Lena, Frank, and their friend set out on that April morning for the church of the Hermit at Einsiedeln, drawn by two old horses which were a sort of local tradition to Frank, for he could not remember when he had not seen them starting and ending the same journey. They had been fifteen years on the road.

Lena sat with her back towards the horses, and was nicely wrapped up in a warm cloak which the doctor had ordered over from Lucerne, at Frank's request.

Frank had learned a great many things in Paris, but he had had no opportunity of studying the traditions and antiquities of his own country. He was accordingly intensely interested in this church of the Hermit, when his elderly friend told him, that the Hermit had been a young man of illustrious birth of the time of Charlemagne ; and that he had left his father's almost royal residence to go and live in the gloomy retreat of a dark forest.

Neither Lena nor Frank had ever heard of him before. And thousands of the tens of thousands of pilgrims, who thank God devoutly at his shrine, never think that the Hermit had once been a living, breathing man like themselves. Let us not respect their simple faith the less because of their ignorance.

The journey from Schwytz to Einsiedeln is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland. The bays and bosoms of the Lowertz, smiling up to the sun, seem emblems of beneficence. The mountains look like sturdy protectors of the valley. The driver exhibited his stock of lore occasionally. Once he said—

‘The mountains keep on their night-caps this morning. It is a good sign. I shall let my horses draw their breath for ten minutes at this brook. The road is rough.’

Fifteen years ago Lena had gone the same journey with her husband. ‘We carried our provisions with us,’ she told Frank and their friend. ‘We took a rest occasionally. The heaven was blue that day. The air was sweet and balmy. We were young and happy.’

Frank had no memories of the road to recall. It was all new to him. When they reached Einsiedeln, his emotion was deep and devout. The church seemed to him a majestic pile of grandeur, protected by mountains more majestic still.

If Frank went to church at Paris, only one among the unnoticed multitude, it was very different here. The young gentleman in the uniform of his school attracted every eye. And when it was whispered that he was the son of Frank Miller, the famous and unfortunate guide, every heart was affected.

Lena’s emotion was deep, and her devotions were long. She had many things to think of. Her own two Franks were very vividly alive to her spirit on that day of thankfulness and remembrance.



The driver exhibited his stock of lore.—Page 148.

The good gentleman who accompanied them, after Frank and he had secured a room at the Peacock Hotel to which Lena might betake herself at her own time, suggested that they should drive eight or nine miles further, to the church of Meinrad on Mount Etzel. Here Frank was sensible of a good deal of that hallowed calm which the Christian heart feels in a place which has been consecrated by centuries of humble prayer.

After coming out of the church his spirit was affected by the beauties of nature all around. He fairly ran off from his respectable friend. He bounded down the verdant slopes which overhang the Lake of Zurich. He walked briskly forward to the bridge of Rapperschwyl, which spans the upper part of the lake, and leads to the town of that name.

‘Oh!’ thought Frank, while waiting for his friend, who was coming up more slowly, ‘I shall spend my life in my own beautiful country.’

We shall see how much this thought was a still small voice from the future.

In the meantime it set Frank a-thinking about Mrs. St. Victor and Mr. Hall.

The next day but one our pilgrims began their return journey to Schwytz. They seemed to Lena to be getting over the ground more speedily than when they came. They had more downhill driving, it is true; for the road is not uphill both ways. Lena, accordingly, was in a pretty constant fright. She kept counselling

the driver to take care. She had more pity for the horses than she seemed to be aware of in the way up. The truth is, Lena's thoughts were not now so well at ease. She knew Frank was with her as far as Einsiedeln, and would wait there with her, and return with her too. But at the end of this journey—she would not think, she would only counsel the coachman.

A letter from Mrs. St. Victor was awaiting Frank when they came home. She wrote to him in the most prudent and affectionate terms, that it was time for him to think of returning to his work at school. She sent him an order for an ample supply of money.

Lena's thoughts were in a sore strait. But Frank saw the course of duty clearly. He told his mother with much tenderness that he must return to Paris. He assured her of his love, and of his strong desire to come home again and live in his own country. When he returned, he said, he would never leave her again.

Lena saw, through her sorrow and her tears, that another parting was not to be avoided. And after the most endearing farewells Frank set out on his journey back to Paris.

Frank was scarcely twelve years of age. It was now nearly ten years since his father had died so young and so strong. Frank's intelligence was well developed. His life had rather forced the growth of his reason. The knowledge that his purse was full, and the uniform of his school, gave him a fine, handsome, happy appear-

ance. A boy such as he was could not fail to attract the attention of his fellow-travellers.

Many boys would have had much to say to these, chiefly about themselves. Frank had certainly a few clearly defined thoughts about himself. But he kept them to himself. His busy brain begat a thousand projects. But the great future he imagined was merely a subtle play and by-play of two principal thoughts—his mother and his country. ‘What good should I do in Paris?’ said the young projector of a future. ‘How could my mother live without me? If I were dead, she would need to resign herself to it. She would weep, and strew my grave with flowers. But I am not dead, and I must live for my mother.’

From Mrs. St. Victor’s point of view, there would have seemed to be a good deal of forgetfulness, not to say ingratitude, in all this. But Frank’s heart was right with the ordinances of God. The fifth commandment enjoined duties about his mother. And the fact remained there unalterable by Mrs. St. Victor, or her sorrow, or her wealth, that she who was so determined to adopt him, was not his mother.

Frank loved Mrs. St. Victor with a truer love than he could have felt had he been capable of forgetting his mother. He was incapable of being ungrateful.

But meantime he was in a railway carriage. His clear head got perplexed with his many projects. And his bright eye turned sleepy. So he began to nod

with whatever amount of comfort was available in the circumstances.

The rays of the sun awoke Frank. They were the early rays of the morning sun. He now looked away from himself and out of the carriage window. He admired the rush of beauty past his gaze. He left the future to Mr. Hall. He knew his present duty to Mrs. St. Victor.

This lady was sitting sadly counting the minutes on the morning of Frank's expected return. She was alone when he came in. The sight of him seemed to affect her more deeply than his departure had done. She was struck with the singularly happy expression of his countenance. It was because his mother was alive, she thought. 'Would he feel so for me?' she said to her own heart.

But never had Frank shown the same amount of affection for his Paris mother, as he called Mrs. St. Victor to himself. It was strange! Was she to hope or to fear?

The air of his native country had not lessened Frank's appetite by any means. And Claude, an admirer of his young master in all things, was in raptures about the number of cutlets and custards, which it laid under tax.

'Have you come back alone?' asked Mrs. St. Victor, with a tone of vague suspicion.

'To be sure I have come alone,' answered Frank, smiling, and not at all aware that Mrs. St. Victor's fears had suggested the very improbable theory that Frank

might have brought his mother with him. Lena was Mrs. St. Victor's rival in the latter lady's unexpressed jealousy. Possibly Lena, who had exactly the same feeling, would have expressed the jealousy and her sense of the rivalry, had she been within reach of speech.

'How is—your—ah—mother?' asked the lady, at strife with herself.

'Oh! she is so well!' was the bright reply. 'When I arrived she seemed dying. But I cured her by coming—at least the doctor said so. We drove up to the church of the Hermit at Einsiedeln to return thanks for her recovery,' added Frank, to fill up the pause.

'Are you glad to come back?' was the next question, and it was a very natural one in the circumstances.

'I am indeed!' said Frank, and he told the truth. Frank was capable of rejoicing in his duty. 'And I owe to you all the kindness I was able to show my mother,' he said in the fulness of his heart. 'I prayed for you in the church of the Hermit at Einsiedeln.'

'I wish I had visited it,' remarked Mrs. St. Victor, and there was sadness in her tone, but it was not all sad.





CHAPTER XXI.

FRANK and Mr. Hall were working out Mrs. St. Victor's ultimate good. They produced blessed effects in the future by clinging to their duty in the present. Faithfulness in little things, and in the narrow present, prepares for a roomy future of large results for good. These cannot be produced by any other method.

Mrs. St. Victor took careful note of Frank's zeal for his studies. His ardour was evidence to her that he thoroughly understood his position. Whether Mrs. St. Victor liked this or not, she could hardly tell. But the admiration it awoke in her heart tended only to complicate the workings of her fancies regarding Frank.

'If he has shaped any other future for himself than the one I have planned,' said she to herself, 'would he be so strongly drawn to this public school? Frank

seems to possess tact as well as talent. He knows that the son of a guide must not be an ordinary scholar.'

Mrs. St. Victor sincerely respected Mr. Hall. This is another evidence of the incorruptible justice of her nature, notwithstanding the main weakness of a subtle selfishness. There is some degree of pain felt when that last word is written. Mrs. St. Victor's selfishness was an offspring of her suffering. She sought every opportunity of bringing Frank and Mr. Hall together.

Frank applied himself to his studies, after his return, with such a will, that notwithstanding the break in his session he secured two first prizes, the one for Latin the other for Greek. He had also certificates for Botany and Natural History. He wrote an essay on shells which procured for him an honourable mention on the prize-day. It will be thus seen that the foundations of literature and the sciences of observation were being laid in his mind.

The holidays were a subject which left no holiday for Mrs. St. Victor's heart. What was she to do? Could she, after all that had passed, refuse to let him go and see his mother, if he wished it? No! It would not be right. She would not leave it to him to express the wish. She would anticipate the desire of his heart. She accordingly said—

'I think, Frank dear, that I have fallen upon a plan for the holidays which will gratify both Lena and me. We shall have you between us. You shall go first to Switzerland, and then come and see me in Lorraine. I shall long for you to come to me. And when you do

come, I hope you will find an additional pleasure in William's company. I have arranged for your favourite school companion to spend the latter part of your holidays with us. His father has given a hearty consent.'

There are two things to notice in this speech. Calling Frank's mother Lena is one of them. Mrs. St. Victor could not latterly use the word mother in relation to Lena. The other thing to notice is that an influence was at work quite the opposite of that which produced this war in her heart with a word. It is that Mrs. St. Victor was gradually opening her eyes to circumstances and their truth.

Frank was in ecstasies. His joy made him jump and gambol about. His tenderness towards his benefactress expressed itself in a number of new but always prudent and taking ways.

Frank went home accordingly. Lena's heart was gladdened deep down in its secret places. Her son drew his native air into his nature with long loving inspirations. He bounded over the mountains, and walked modestly through his native town. Mrs. St. Victor's messages were much more mellow. Lena could bear their tenderest strains. The lady's dislike for the word mother was a strange symptom. And yet not strange. Health has begun to recover its hold upon life, when the sense of disease is strong. Whether this is always true or not, certain it is, that Mrs. St. Victor's conduct was now the outflow of a purer sympathy with the duty she owed to the feelings of others.

Lena felt that she could let Frank go with less pain this time than on any of the two previous occasions. Frank made his way straight to Mrs. St. Victor's country house in Lorraine. He found her different and yet the same as he had always seen her. She was even more tender towards him than ever. But the most striking change in her conduct was her bearing towards others. She had kindly words to say to all the children. And this in her case was wonderful. One of the first things we were informed about this lady was her orders to the servants to keep children away from her. These orders expressed a feeling which had remained obstinate hitherto. Even the children's party she took Frank to was only borne with that she might gaze upon him. But now she seemed to be pleased when children came near her.

What had happened? This was more than any one could tell in all its details. But a change had been wrought.

Generosity had begun to find room and exercise sway in this soul which had been contracted by sickness and sorrow.

Lorraine is a lovely country. When Frank arrived at The Turrets, Mrs. St. Victor's mansion, he found that it had been arranged in kindness to him, that William should come there on the forenoon of the same day on which he arrived in the evening. The two boys spent a rapturous hour or two before going to bed, notwithstanding that they were both fatigued.

Next day they had reason to begin to admire Mrs. St. Victor's power of entertaining her guests. She showed



They would seek a shady tree.—Page 160.

quite a talent for amusing boys day after day. She arranged parties in the wood which surrounded The Turrets. Rides on horseback were seasonably proposed. The carriage horses did not get standing too long idle in the stable. Fishing, and even hunting, to the extent of luring larks with a mirror, were suggested, and helped forward in the most wonderful way by Mrs. St. Victor.

The two boys might well have forgotten all about reading. But they did not. Indeed, some days were so hot that reading was the only amusement left to them. They would vary this amusement indoors by going out into the wood with their books. Then they would seek a shady tree.

A favourite mode of reading with these two boys was for each to have his own copy of the same author. They did this especially with the Greek and Latin classical authors. They read aloud and translated to each other turn about. And they went at this scholarly exercise with all the earnestness of enthusiasm.

Frank and William obeyed the bell for luncheon or dinner as punctually as they used to do at school. But the first glance they got of the table always reminded them that the lions' provider had not been Mr. Hynde.

William betrayed unmistakable signs of many a culinary surprise. They were always so natural, and the boy had so little greed in his nature, that Mrs. St. Victor and Frank enjoyed the humour with which they were conveyed. He was quite a rival to Frank in Claude's hearty admiration of a good appetite. The two boys

devoured the ducks, and all the attendant and after delights, to the perfect satisfaction of Mrs. St. Victor and her cook. To a cook, hearty eating savours very much of gratitude.

The boys had a good many jokes at the expense of the absent and unconscious Mr. Hynde.

'How would old Hynde have looked all day if he knew he had these plums in store for us, and our pocket-money?' Frank would say with a boy's enthusiasm.

'I never had much pocket-money, and he never had such plums,' was the answer, during consumption of the plump deliciousness.

But the holidays came to an end. One morning the roofs did not ring their echo inside to boyish laughter. Outside they were covered with snow. The flowers were all faded. The dead bodies of many of them were disregarded by the heedless winter wind. The roses hung their heads as orphan children do in heartless cities where they feel the pinchings of want, and no one is left to care for them.

It was the month of October. The carriage had just driven away from The Turrets, with Mrs. St. Victor and Frank and William inside. The indispensable Claude rode behind.





CHAPTER XXII.

FRANK made many friends at school. This was mainly due to his gentleness and modest bravery ; but no doubt his abundant supply of pocket-money would have its own peculiar influence on some. Frank's pocket-money did not burn holes in his purse, neither was any great proportion of it spent on himself to the exclusion of others.

At the same time, he was but seldom invited by the parents of his school-fellows to visit them at home. One day Mrs. Butt, the mother of a rather forward boy who was dreadfully anxious to get a prize, invited Frank to her house.

'I hear you are a great gun, Mr. Miller,' she said while supplying Frank with a few chestnuts. 'I wish you would just let one of your superfluous prizes slip our Charley's way.'

Frank was enraptured, and forthwith he vowed to

himself that Charley Butt should get a prize, if he could by any ingenuity both lose it himself and secure it for him. This lady seemed to Frank to be one of the most amiable, kind, and tender-hearted of mothers.

But Mrs. Butt was a loud-spoken person. And, unfortunately for Frank's magnanimous resolution, and the magnificent picture he had drawn of the greatness of the goodness of Mrs. Butt, he overheard her on the other side of the partition doors, in the ante-drawing room, saying to her ambitious son Charley—

‘Don't make a companion of that boy Miller at school. He is the son of a vulgar peasant. At all events, be sure you never know him out of school.’

A vulgar peasant! Frank thought only of his mother. His father did not naturally rise to his mind when reference was made to his parentage. Frank was a Swiss. The Swiss regard all the heroes of their noble little country's history as the ancestors of each generation. Frank thought of rushing in and making a reply to that effect, and claiming all the ancestral honour due to him because of the country of his birth. But no! the image of Mr. Hall rose before his mind, and warned him off from such a puny vanity. Another image rose. It was Mrs. St. Victor. She counselled him in the secret recesses of his heart to be a gentleman. Frank did not rush in. Another image rose before his mind. It was his mother. Frank was proud, possessed, and calm. Just then Mrs. Butt came bustling into the room, and began to pay him some compliments. Frank said—

‘I was sorry, Ma’am, to overhear your advice to Master Charles. If I could have avoided it, I would have done it to save myself pain. As it is, I am the son of a peasant. If you choose to apply the term vulgar to her, there is a sense in which some persons use the word, in which it may be correct. But she never taught me anything that does not always seem to me to have been noble.’

Frank did not add the priggish, ‘I wish you a good day, Mrs. Butt.’ Nor did he make any of the signs of having triumphantly shut up and cut up an opponent. There was a strong sense of truth upon him. He was putting on his gloves as he spoke in deep tones of earnest pathos. He bowed respectfully to Mrs. Butt, and walked away, not in the spirit of a conqueror, but feeling much complicated sorrow. The sense of society was upon him. The mystery of its repulsions overawed him.

This circumstance would never have been heard of at school, but for Charley Butt’s boast of the way his mother had so cleverly taken the conceit out of Miller. William got the accurate details from Frank, after he had asked for them. William loved Frank more devotedly than ever, and suggested one revenge which accomplished itself, whether owing to this vow or not. The vow was to fight hardest for any prize Charley Butt might try for. Charley Butt got no prize.

The sessions passed over at school. Frank was successful. He loved his mother. He adored Mr. Hall. He was affectionate and grateful to Mrs. St. Victor.

Frank had been three more years at school. He was now fifteen. His career had been all that Mr. Hall's heart could have wished, when the good man and excellent teacher suggested to Frank this road to honour.

Frank was one of the six best scholars in his school, who were selected to the general competition under the auspices of the University of Paris. It was a great honour and a great responsibility. These six have the burden of the reputation of their school and their teachers laid upon them. William was another of the six to Frank's immense delight.

The great day dawned. All the teams of six assembled at the Sorbonne at half-past seven in the morning. Each brought a supply of paper to scribble on before he made out a fair copy of his answers on the official portfolio. The examination would probably last till six in the evening. The assembled gladiators accordingly had biscuits, cakes, chocolate, or bread and sausages, in their coat pockets. Some of them had even small bottles of the light wine of their country.

There was, no doubt, a regulation cup of coffee served up to them in the morning. But boys at public examinations seem to succeed best when they improve such regulations slightly, each according to his own taste. At least, they think so. Certainly they behave according to this idea.

The first day is always the great day. Familiarity reduces to shape. It saves room in the imagination.

People call this breeding contempt. It is not necessarily so. It lets the senses and understanding get the imagination under control. So as the examination days pass over, their greatness passes away. This examination is on such a great scale that it takes five or six weeks generally to get over all the subjects. The greatest mystery presides over the results day by day. Each boy is a mystery to every other. The examiners are a terrible mystery to all the boys.

The usual motto to secure impartial judgment from the committee of reference was affixed by each competitor.

Among the teachers there are always, of course, certain results expected from particular boys. Mr. Hall was of opinion that Frank and William would secure the two most honourable prizes,—the former the prize for Latin verse, the latter the prize for the higher mathematics.

Only the prizemen are invited to the solemn announcement of results. The secretary sends the invitations the evening before. Frank and William were invited from their school. They were cheered by all the school, and the other four had no reason to be ashamed of the two names written in the select list of honours.

Mrs. St. Victor was duly informed of this great event. She had latterly altogether altered her mind on the question of Frank's education. This was only one of many symptoms of health being restored to her spirit.

She had a right to a reserved seat on the day of distributing the prizes. And she took care to secure it. Every day she longed for the certain but slowly advancing hour in which she would drive Frank in triumph in her gayest equipage.

Mr. Hall felt that he had a good right to congratulate himself on Frank's success. Mr. Hall had a good memory. And in his soul he did not think it necessary to say to Mrs. St. Victor that all the thanks were due to her. And he didn't say it. But Mr. Hall thought there was another lady who had a right to a seat in the hall on the day of the distribution of the prizes. That was Frank's mother, of whom he had heard so much that was good.

'I know Frank,' said Mr. Hall during one of his frequent conversations with himself. 'He is proud of his well-won honour. He is grateful to Mrs. St. Victor. But it will meet one of the holiest wishes of his nature if his mother be present.'

To say this to himself was, in Mr. Hall's case, the same thing as taking steps to bring it about. He slept over it, however, and next morning mentioned it to Mrs. Hall. At her request, he wrote at once to Lena inviting her to come to Paris, to take up her abode at his house, and to be present at the distribution of the council's honours, of which Frank had secured one of the highest. He added that it was one of the finest sights in the world.

This letter caused a confusion of great joy in Lena's

heart. Dolly was at once consulted. The happy mother read the letter to her over and over again.

‘I am sure I don’t know what it is all about,’ said Dolly with perfect truthfulness. ‘Is it a sort of battle Frank is to fight? But he has won the battle. I suppose you are to go and hear his name proclaimed to all France. I think Frank will be the Landmann of Schwytz some day. Perhaps of all Switzerland!’

‘I was thinking that this very morning, Dolly; but I did not like to say it,’ said Lena with a mother’s wonderful elasticity of fondness.

The Landmann is the president or sort of prime minister of the canton or country.

‘Ay! Ay! Frank will be a great man,’ responded Dolly, proud of Lena’s son, and silently sorrowful that her beautiful boy was in the cold, cold grave. ‘But ours is the country from which all the great men come. Switzerland is the home of heroes.’ These latter sentiments were primary beliefs in Dolly’s sagacious mind; and they were as true as many a great statesman’s oration, profound philosopher’s disquisition, or poet-laureate’s Tyrtæan song.

‘You will become quite gay in Paris,’ said Dolly, changing the subject.

‘Do you think so?’ asked Lena, not quite sure that she would not.

‘To be sure! When they are placing a crown of gold on Frank’s head, you will require to look like his mother,’ let out a few of Dolly’s remarks regard-

ing the coming event, whose nature she did not understand.

It was all settled. Lena was comforted with Dolly's counsel. Preparations were set afoot, and Dolly looked sharply after the details of her advice on every point being attended to. She got Lena dressed in a fine new green skirt, a black velvet jacket, white bishop sleeves, a scarlet stomacher, and a black velvet bonnet adorned with white lace, which hung over Lena's brow like the complexion fall so fashionable now-a-days.

Lena thus dressed according to the best taste of Dolly, for really she had little to say in the matter herself, and not quite sure whether she was not all the time in a dream, set off for Paris, or as she said for France. It was all the same thing in Lena's first visit to a foreign country.

When she reached Paris, Frank's mother was utterly unconscious that fashion was making grimaces at her. She had a rather large bag, but Lena had been accustomed all her life to carry her own parcels, and the last thought that would have occurred to her in this world, would have been to throw away money on a porter. But she had also another parcel. Lena thought of a present to the kind Mr. Hall, of whom Frank had written so often and so much. So she brought a cheese with her of her own making, and we who read this story know how much that meant to Frank's happiness in by-gone years. The parcel on her left arm was most palpably a cheese. It addressed two senses as such.

The sight at a little distance. The scent if a Parisian hot-house nostril was near. The ordinary grins and grimaces passed through the short stage of their fleeting existence, and Lena was all unconscious.

It is only fair to Lena to remark, that the kindly thought of bringing a cheese as a present to the man who had been good to her son, was as noble in the eyes of the great Father, the merciful Father of the foolish and the wise, as not employing a porter seemed a source of fun to the wisdom of fashion.

Mr. Hall would have waited for Lena at the station if she had written to say she was coming. He would have been on the look-out train after train, if he could have guessed to a day or two when she would come. He certainly did not expect that she would get ready and come away so promptly. But when he saw her, he admired all he beheld. And he admired not the least her unhesitating response to his invitation.

Lena, I have said before, was a lady in right of her own heart. She was timid, it is true, but when Mr. Hall introduced her to his wife, he felt proud of both. Mrs. Hall was charmed with her, bag, and cheese, and skirt, and jacket, and sleeves, and stomacher, and bonnet, and lace, and face, and all. The Parisian scholar's wife, herself a lady by station and education, apologised for the Parisian cream when she was pouring it into a cup of tea for the fine Swiss peasant, the widow of Frank Miller, the famous guide, the mother of Frank, Mr. Hall's great favourite.

It was about six o'clock in the evening. Lena was tired, and did not say she wasn't. Mrs. Hall showed her into a very small spare bed-room. It felt and looked spacious and palatial to Lena. She went early to bed, and rose next morning with Swiss roses and lilies blooming on a face and neck of forty years of age.

CHAPTER XXIII.



LENA had one whole day to rest before the finest sight in the world exhibited itself. She remained in the house all day. Her heart was glad when she heard Mr. and Mrs. Hall and their children speak of Frank.

The mighty morning dawned. Lena did not forget Dolly's counsels. She spent a little more time than ordinary in front of the looking-glass. She admired this looking-glass quite as much as the face and dress she saw in it. The last touch to her toilette was to fasten round her neck the chain of a tiny gold cross which she had never worn since her husband's death.

Lena was tall ; her complexion was the glow of health through a delicate skin ; and a ray of happiness gleaming from every feature of her face rendered her beautiful under the weight of her forty years.

Mr. and Mrs. Hall both remarked it. Mr. Hall looked at her, and at once burst out in a tirade against the vanities of fashion as it is worshipped by women. Most women would have preferred a Parisian dress to their national costume in the circumstances. Lena's

courage was a consolation to Mr. Hall's philosophic soul. What amused both Mrs. Hall and Lena was the keen observation of details in dress which the linguist and man of science seemed to have indulged in, all unknown to his wife hitherto.

Mr. Hall was possessed by two feelings this morning, as far as Lena was concerned. The one was a sincere respect for the picturesque taste of the Swiss peasantry in the matter of dress ; the other was of the reformatory kind. He thought the showy dames assembled at the distribution of prizes would be rebuked for their wastefulness in expensive folly. He certainly knew they ought to be ; but unfortunately this is not a world of things in general as they ought to be. And as to dresses in particular, the votaries of fashion have a pretty clear perception of things as they are.

Mr. Hall had foreseen and arranged everything. Mrs. Hall could not get away from her family to go with Lena to the hall ; nay, she could not easily have got in, and Mr. Hall had a great dislike of asking favours.

Lena was Frank's mother ; she could get admission on that ground. Accordingly, Mr. Hall procured her a ticket, and saw her to the door. The usher looked at the stranger, but was quite polite and showed her to a seat in the gallery reserved for parents. When the hall was filled, Lena saw a new sight. Two thousand people in one room ! Whatever the rest of the finest sight in the world might be, this was something to begin with. The scholars occupied their own gallery, which seemed

to Lena to be only very long wooden steps and stairs. She scanned them keenly, but could not see Frank.

Mrs. St. Victor, sitting in the front row, was more fortunate. She knew where to look for him. She made him out at once, and she and Frank exchanged signs of recognition.

It was an hour after Lena had got to her seat before anything in particular began to appear to be done. Then, however, the minister of public instruction, the heads of the University, and a president specially chosen for the present honourable occasion, took their places on the platform.

There was instant silence. After a short prayer in Latin, a learned professor began a long speech in the same tongue. Lena began to despair of its ever coming to an end. She wondered that people would be so weak as to applaud it so loud. She hoped Frank would not have to go through any such unnecessary performance.

The Latin oration was followed by one in French. Lena did not understand it at all. She heard the words, but not their sense.

At last the great ceremony began. The names of the successful prizemen were read, and their honours were duly recorded to the admiring two thousand. There was no crown of gold put on anybody's head, as Dolly had anticipated; but there was a crown of glory in the eyes of both the successful and the unsuccessful competitors, especially the latter.

The lowest prizes began to be distributed. They proceeded upwards according to their grades. Lena had begun to think there was something wrong with Frank or about him.

But how her heart did beat, or rather stand still, when the last name, the highest on the list, was called. 'Francis Miller, first prize for Latin verse,' were words which literally transported Lena. Literally transported I say advisedly; for how it happened she never knew, and I cannot tell. But whereas she had taken her seat on a form considerably back from the front, now she was at the very front; nay, she was leaning over it. Nobody could deny it. For, by some energy quite as inexplicable as the locomotion, she said, whether low or aloud she never knew, and I cannot tell—

'Frank, my boy, I am here.'

Strange! The result was not to produce any discord even in the feelings of the great ladies. The voice and the words seemed to harmonize with the whole proceedings. Everybody looked round, of course. The minister of public instruction showed by his manner that he was rather pleased with the interruption than otherwise. The peasant-mother of a boy in Frank's proud position might well find her emotion too much for her. Every one knew now that Frank was only the adopted son of Mrs. St. Victor; and nobody who saw Lena doubted that she was his own mother.

When Lena recovered herself, she was dreadfully troubled to see Mrs. St. Victor sitting not far from her.

Not a feature in the Parisian lady's face betrayed the least emotion. It was a good thing that there was still a great deal of ceremony to be gone through. It gave Mrs. St. Victor and Lena time to recover themselves. The lady needed the time as much as the peasant, notwithstanding all her trained control of her features.

Frank had not seen his mother till he heard her. His self-command was wonderful. He showed no excitement, and certainly no annoyance. He knew he would soon both see and hear her where no one had a right to stare.

All was over. The hall was empty. Lena would not put herself forward to get out before others. Mr. Hall was waiting for her at the door. He was very impatient till she came. Lena was the very last. She was confused, and in some way ashamed of herself. She shrank from the stare of the ladies; and they certainly laid no restraints on their curiosity. Mr. Hall was looking eagerly inwards for Lena. He did not notice any one behind him; and when he was just going to make a sort of spring at her, he was anticipated by Mrs. St. Victor's exclamation—

'What a pleasant surprise, my dear Lena!'

'I really do not know how I began, dear Lena!'

Hall was so kind as to ~~were real~~ very well where I am. Mr. Lena. so the address to ask me to come,' stammered out

'It is like Mr. Gold round at him. I but Mr. Hall,' said Mrs. St. Victor, looking invention. He can't be quite envious of his power of better. find out happiness in ways which



Lena's joy was full.—Page 178.

put to shame sluggards like myself in that department of activity. It was very kind to Frank, and I feel so grateful for it.'

Mrs. St. Victor had recovered herself. She was acting no part but that of her own heart when she addressed Lena so. She insisted that Lena should come and be her guest; but Lena very gratefully declined. She felt that she would be happier with Mrs. Hall than she could be at a house like Mrs. St. Victor's. Besides, she felt very properly that it would not be treating the Halls respectfully.

The rest of the day was a holiday to all. Mrs. St. Victor made herself very agreeable. She did all she could to add to Lena's happiness as long as she could keep her away from Mr. and Mrs. Hall. She wished Mr. Hall to join them, but he had other duties.

When Frank came up to embrace his mother, Lena's joy was full.

She was not quite sure yet that it might not be a dream after all. But there was Frank, and she would cling to the belief that she was awake. Frank walked beside his mother, and seemed, as he was, so proud of her. When they got into Mrs. St. Victor's house, which looked to Lena like a monstrous horn of plenty with stores of wealth in stories, and always just going to be poured out upon all passers-by, she felt quite at her ease, because Frank was by her. She sat down on the silk-covered chairs with an apparent sense of what they

were made for, although it must be owned Lena had never seen silk put to such a use before. Lena sat at table and accepted the services of the waiters in such a way that they made no grimaces in the room nor jeering remarks out of it.

After dinner, Mrs. St. Victor took Lena out for a ride, and Frank accompanied them on horseback. Nobody would have guessed that she had never sat in a private carriage before, and only once or twice to speak of in a hired conveyance, the most notable occasion being the ride to and from Einsiedeln, to offer thanks in the church of the Hermit.

When she saw Frank mounted on a spirited beast, her son's fine appearance, and the beauty of the horse, caused her to say to herself—

‘The way of the Lord is not as our way. I would have made my tears a hindrance to all this, if I could.’

There was another honour awaiting Frank and his friend William Verny. The two firsts, the holder of the prize for Latin verse and he of the mathematical prize, were expected to dine with the minister of public instruction.

William did not feel this honour a happiness. When he and Frank were calling on Mr. Hall, he mentioned his apprehension about how he might be able to conduct himself. Mr. Hall said :—‘Do as you always do. Be polite and modest. In such company don't speak unless when you are addressed. They would not ask you to

give you any uneasiness. There is no fear of how you will conduct yourself.'

In spite of Mr. Hall's philosophy, William felt apprehensive. To dine with a minister of State was decidedly new; and the new and the unknown are the same in some circumstances. It was like venturing on an unknown island whose inhabitants he was not very sure about.

If Frank had not been going, William would have been off to Lorraine to avoid the troublesome honour; for Mrs. St. Victor had arranged with his godfather that he should spend the holidays with Frank at The Turrets. The young gentleman was humble. He had no idea that the minister and his friends would be glad to see at table with them the holder of the first prize for mathematics.

Mrs. St. Victor was quite easy about how Frank would conduct himself at the great man's table; and she was right. It turned out not to be such a dreadful affair after all. Frank answered the kindly questions that were put to him with modesty and accuracy. His friend took courage, and acquitted himself wonderfully. The two young gentlemen received the most hearty congratulations from all present. They left quite pleased with themselves, as they had a right to be. The company were more pleased with them than they had any thought of.

Mrs. St. Victor was wondering how long Lena meant to stay in Paris. Lena soon began to weary for the

fresh air of Switzerland. She felt also the social ways of Parisian life a fatiguing restraint. She began to say to herself how glad she would be to go away home and take Frank with her.





CHAPTER XXIV.

LENA'S appearance in the hall was, it must be admitted, a painful surprise to Mrs. St. Victor. If this lady's better nature overcame, still the struggle was terrible. And we have not been allowed to see it all.

Mrs. St. Victor had subsequent opportunities of observing how powerful even absence was to deepen and purify a love which was according to God's law. That Frank's love for his mother was according to that law, and that she had done her best to divert it from his mother to herself, were two facts which had begun slowly to shape themselves into centres of light in Mrs. St. Victor's mind.

In deep trouble she began to think that the end of this course, in which she had sought for happiness, was coming within sight. This dawn of conviction shed grey mists of sadness over Mrs. St. Victor's spirit.

On the evening of the day on which she faced round and righted herself to look at the truth in her own heart, Mrs. St. Victor retired early. Sleep seemed only to awaken gloomy memories. The vision of an unprofitable past life unfolded itself. Tears poured out upon illusions had caused nothing wholesome to grow. A fickle glitter of uncertain light danced for a time over imaginary forms which were busy unmooring her spirit.

In the morning it was different. The storm had blasted itself, and burst into a calm. Mrs. St. Victor was still sad, but there was an expression of sweetness in her sorrowful countenance which rendered her looks peculiarly attractive. She determined to distract her own thoughts by busying them this day about the happiness of Lena. She began by leaving the mother and son more unreservedly alone.

A few days after she asked Lena to teach her a kind of knitting which she had not seen out of Switzerland. While they were engaged at this, the following conversation took place :—

Mrs. St. Victor. How time passes ! Frank is now no longer a boy. He is a tall and handsome young man.

Lena. He is indeed. I sometimes think he is two young men—

Mrs. St. Victor. That is a new way of expressing a mother's fondness.

Lena. I was going to say that outwardly he is a Parisian young gentleman. But I know that in his heart he is still a Swiss boy.

Mrs. St. Victor. And which do you suppose he likes best? Does he ever say to you what he would wish to do? I mean, does he seem to prefer any profession?

Lena. It is not easy to guess Frank's tastes.

Mrs. St. Victor. Don't misunderstand me. He has plenty to live on if he should never think of doing anything. And he will have more. But does he seem to have any liking to be, for example, a medical man or a lawyer?

Lena. I am sure he will wish to return to Schwytz, and that would not be a good place for him as either of these. We never need doctors there much, and we don't like them. And we have a way of settling our own disputes and arranging our business without paying for lawyers.

Mrs. St. Victor. I think he should be allowed to remain in Paris a little longer. I don't suppose it would be good for him to know that he will not need to depend on any actual pursuit. And it might be as well not to mention the hint I have given you about my intentions.

Lena. No. Not to him nor to anybody else, either here or in Schwytz.

Mrs. St. Victor. When I was left a widow, and then childless, I felt myself very helpless. I could not busy myself with the many noble charities of this great city. My thoughts would not flow out upon others.

Lena. I am sure many would have their thoughts about you.

Mrs. St. Victor. Oh! as to that, my fortune secured

me flattery enough. Offers of marriage were frequent. But I could not even think of them.

Lena. I understand that.

Mrs. St. Victor. I am sure you do, and have had occasion to know what the feeling is. But I was going to say, I tried what travel would do for me. I travelled frequently and far. But I never got away from myself. It was always the same scene whatever were the surroundings. Everything had the same colour. I looked at cities and at solitary places through my own dim eyes. And I saw nothing but myself in them all. Not even my lost ones did I see. It was killing me.

Lena. I don't understand that.

Mrs. St. Victor. No ! I am quite sure you don't. Well, at Schwytz, I seemed to get worse. I began to fear my mind would give way. But it was a turning point. For Frank's voice one evening was the first thing outside of myself that I had heard for years with any satisfaction. When I saw him next day, the current of my thoughts reversed itself. Instead of dashing inwards and breaking themselves into a foam of melancholy, they all flowed out towards Frank.

Lena. I am sure, ma'am, I don't know what to say. It has all led you to be so kind to Frank. I often wonder what I should do.

Mrs. St. Victor. The world came back to me then. I wished to appear in it. Frank was to be my heir. I would no longer have to go into society alone. My son would protect me. Thoughts like these gave me a sort

of delicious joy sometimes. He has been the occasion of great changes in my heart.

Lena. When I was dying lately, the very sight of him seemed to make me better.

Mrs. St. Victor. He loves me, I know, but not as a mother is loved.

Lena. God gave him to me.

Mrs. St. Victor. I shall finish for Frank what I have commenced. If he is determined to go back to his own country, I shall take care that the time he has spent at Paris shall not have to be reckoned as lost. Frank is very fond of study. You have seen how well he has done. He had better continue at his studies another year at least.

Lena. Will all this learning make him a wise and good man, do you think?

Mrs. St. Victor. I should hope so. To understand books is a very good preparation for understanding men and things.

Lena. And beasts?

Mrs. St. Victor. Why specify beasts?

Lena. Because in Schwytz that is the kind of knowledge that will be useful. Flocks may be large and on that account very unprofitable. And I think it would be so if a man tried to manage them who came straight from that large hall where I was so foolish.

Mrs. St. Victor. Not foolish, Lena. But Frank will have plenty of time to acquire such needful knowledge. Don't be afraid of that. I hope not to disqualify him for

life by educating him. It will be as well to say nothing about our conversation to day.

Lena. You may rely upon that, ma'am.

This conversation was anything but talk to kill time. It was two very dissimilar hearts in close communion on one subject. And the object of it was devotedly loved by both, in their singularly different ways.

Mrs. St. Victor had been struggling with herself during the greater part of the conversation. She had gained another victory over herself. But the conquest was far from complete. The rich lady had many thoughts which, as she did not cherish them, I shall not record. But it was quite natural that she should sometimes think she had been too familiar with the peasant; and, at other times, that she should half resolve to have all her original intention carried into accomplishment.

But she never once thought of using her power as a threat or even as a constraint. Mrs. St. Victor was a lady of many excellences. We have had occasion, while reading her story, to respect her sense of justice, and even almost to admire some gleams of a better self than that she had tried so hard to develop. We may perhaps come to love her by and bye.

Lena had a rather confused remembrance of a good deal that was said. She knew before what Mrs. St. Victor had done for Frank. She had had reason to suppose that she would not desert him after leading him so far. She was interested in recalling Mrs. St. Victor's account of the influence Frank had exerted over her.

But above all things she remembered that she was not to speak about what had been said. And Lena remembered that she had promised of her own accord not to mention it even in Schwytz. Now this was a trouble to Lena. Such a trouble was it, that she could almost have wished not to have had the conversation. Lena's nature was simple and direct. Such natures don't manage secrets very wisely. Then there was Dolly to encounter. And it is not to be forgotten that Lena's truthfulness was such that her whole soul pledged itself to keep all the secret, notwithstanding the many difficulties this defence of what seemed neither a citadel nor a treasure would have to encounter.

Lena's thoughts that night in the bed which Mrs. Hall had made so soft for her were :—'Well I should not like to be that lady. I could not sleep in yon great house. I should dream all night. Perhaps I might speak in my sleep and tell somebody the secret. But rich people have droll ideas. She wanted to take Frank all to herself, and keep him away from me. It led to her being very kind to him. I will say that. And she could not help her trouble. It was very great. I don't wish to see her often and have such talks, especially when there is to be a secret. What an awful secret this is—awful to keep.'

And Lena slept and dreamed that she had told everybody the secret, and that everybody had told Mrs. St. Victor what she had done.

CHAPTER XXV.

LENA was quite relieved when she awoke next morning, and found that there had been nobody near her to learn anything about what Mrs. St. Victor had been saying. Not only so, she felt her heart very light and gay on this particular morning. She rather wondered at herself. She was afraid Mrs. Hall would see in her smiles all the good things she knew about Frank's future, and was not to tell. So in her simplicity and sincerity, our guardian of the secret—an office of trouble Mrs. St. Victor had unwittingly appointed her to—fell upon a notable plan. She resolved to have toothache. This would give her a pretext for putting her handkerchief to her mouth as a watch to her lips. She would not say she had toothache. She would only pretend.

‘Toothache in your beautiful teeth, Lena?’ said Mrs. Hall, with her cheerful hearty morning looks upon her.

‘It is only a precaution. I would rather put myself to this inconvenience than suffer a greater pain,’ replied Lena, with a use of words which might have aroused all the envy of a Metternich or a Talleyrand

‘Take some of my porridge,’ said Henrietta.

‘I hope it will not keep you from eating,’ said Henrietta’s mother to Lena.

‘Not at all,’ was Lena’s reply. ‘Speaking would do me more harm than anything. I shall eat, and look, and listen.’

The defence thus far was skilful. It consisted in avoiding an attack. Lena did honour to the breakfast laid before her. Mrs. Hall once more admired the Swiss superiority to suffering. Had she had toothache that morning, an ill her teeth were woful heir to, she could not have eaten.

Lena took a deep interest in the conversation, and shared in it by a sort of pantomime. Being gifted with great quickness of wit and expressive features, she played her pantomime to the tremendous admiration of the children. They improved the occasion. They put all the questions they could think of for the fun of seeing the answers. They invented more questions, and would not have heard the answers for the world. To see them was the fun.

A beautiful healthy woman—I had almost said matron—of upwards of forty years of age, thus playing with children, is a sight which freshens up one’s hopes of humanity. To the children that breakfast-time had seen the performance of a piece of most enjoyable comedy.

Lena stayed in Paris a few weeks longer. She began to feel, however, that she had trespassed upon good Mrs. Hall’s hospitality long enough. And, notwith-

standing the attraction that Frank was in Paris, she began to long very much to go home again to Schwytz. Dolly had promised to look after her goats, and all that belonged to a household like Lena's that could not be left long without some one to help. There were some flowers which would need watering it might be. There were a favourite dog and a faithful cat. Frank's white lamb had long gone the way of all sheep. But Lena cherished a beautiful canary which had helped wonderfully to sing away her loneliness.

All these household cares were weighing on Lena's heart. And she did not wish to put Mrs. Hall at the one end of her journey, and Dolly at the other, to any further trouble.

Lena took a very respectful leave of Mrs. St. Victor. It was not in the nature of things that there should be any deep emotion at the parting of these two. At least not yet ; and there was not.

It was a different thing, however, to say good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Hall, and Arthur and Henrietta, and Louisa and Victor. The other two children were too young to feel interested. One of Lena's great pleasures in Paris had been sharing in the care of these two babies. The younger being strong and plump, and the elder of the two being rather puny, they were regarded as the two babies.

Lena did, however, manage to get away from them all, after many kisses to the children, and lots of promises to Arthur to take him to see the Hacken and the

Lowertz, and to Henrietta and Louisa to bring them a great many Swiss toys and dolls.

The parting with Frank was the last, and the least easily described. I need not say it was very tender. Lena's looks were an anticipation of loneliness. And, on the other hand, her last good-bye left her lips like a winged angel of hope. It rendered Frank happy as much as it surprised him.

When Lena was nearing home, after a journey which she felt almost insupportably tedious, the burden of her secret began to be heavy on her soul again. The first thing Dolly would ask would be what the great lady intended about Frank. She felt as if she would rather run down the Rigi backwards than sit face to face with Dolly when they were first left alone by the other neighbours. This was the terrible side of her secret. But there was another side. Not in all this world was there any joy she could share with Dolly that would be so great as telling her all that Mrs. St. Victor had said she intended to do for Frank. The good news was now like a bird in its cage, now like a wild beast fretting and growling at its bars. But it must not be let out in either case.

At last Schwytz was reached, and Lena was in her own house. Frank had written to Dolly, and everything was comfortable when Lena reached the house in which Frank, her husband, had offered up his family prayers, and Frank, her son, was born.

But the trial with Dolly had not come on yet. There



Lena talked freely to them.—Page 194.

were lots of neighbours who took an interest in Lena. If they had never done it before, this was the time to begin. She had been away at Paris. What sort of place was it? Was it much bigger than Schwytz? That being admitted doubtfully, it was not as well-built? Certainly it could neither be so clean nor so healthy. Brunnen was a long way off. Lucerne was a far journey. Only a cart of cheese gathered from a whole country's side could tempt a Schwytzer so far. They all stayed as long as Dolly thought it fit anybody should stay, when Lena looked so tired.

Next day when Lena came out to look after the goats, and the goats were jubilant at the sight of her, the neighbours, old and young, gathered round her again.

Lena talked freely to them. Every question that was put she tried to answer, and any allusion to Frank's future was easily got over in a crowd.

At last the dreaded moment darkened down. Dolly and Lena were left alone.

Dolly. Well, about Frank? I thought these women would never be done talking of things that nobody cares about. What does the lady intend about Francey?

Lena. She is a very fine lady, Dolly.

Dolly. Fine to look at, you mean?

Lena. Yes.

Dolly. I knew as much before. What kind of a heart has she got? Will she do all for Frank that she has given him reason to hope for? Or will she leave

the man to struggle, after pleasing herself with the boy, and making him good for nothing?

Lena. She has a kind heart.

Dolly. Is this one of the fine things you have learnt in Paris, not to answer a body's questions? Have you left your head behind you?

Lena. My head behind me!

Dolly. Well, you have it on you; has anything gone wrong inside?

Lena. Inside!

Dolly. Yes, you are not too old to get your head turned.

Lena. Not too old!

Dolly. I suppose this is a new kind of way of joking.

Lena. Joking!

Dolly. Ah! I have been foolish I see. You are my own good Lena. These rich people are strange in their ways. Edward used to tell me that when he was alive. We must never come over what they say. You are wise, Lena. Don't. That is the way mischief is made when we don't mean it. I may suppose anything I like.

Lena. You will not suppose anything very unkind.

Dolly. Well, I'll suppose that the lady has looked up a rich heiress for Frank to marry. He will have flunkeys and footmen. I suppose these are the same thing. Are they not? He will have a carriage and six. He will build you a fine house, and I shall come and keep you from being lonely. Isn't that the way, Lena?

Lena. Heigh-ho ! I should not wish for a kinder companion than you, Dolly.

The defence was complete. The beleaguering force not only raised the siege but capitulated, leaving all the terms of such an unusual surrender to the resolute governor of the citadel of a very simple secret.

Dolly was not altogether on the right scent. Lena felt reassured and at ease after this. The secret was kept, but ceased to be burdensome. So the two friends talked every day about all that Lena had seen. The first thing Dolly asked after when they got into their old confidence was the crown of gold. And that there should be any crown of glory that was not made of gold was more than she could comprehend. Mrs. St. Victor's frequent change of dress, and the nice sweet shapes of some of Mrs. Hall's silk aprons and lace caps were subjects of grave discussion.

'But, Dolly,' said Lena one day, 'I did make such a fool of myself.'

Dolly. Who? you, Lena ! I should not like to hear any other body saying that of you.

Lena. But I did.

Dolly. How? Where? When?

Lena. In the great room, where there were thousands and thousands of people.

Dolly. A thousand people in one room ! You must have had your head running round.

Lena. No ; I had not ; at least, not at first. How it went after, I don't know. It may have run round, or it

may have turned outside in ; but I made a fool of myself.

Dolly. But did you say there were a thousand people in one room ?

Lena. I said thousands upon thousands ; but now I remember, Mr. Hall said there were over two thousand.

Dolly. There is no room in our country would hold the half of a thousand. The church in Schwytz here would not. You should have told that to Jenny Smith when she was saying that Schwytz was as big as Paris.

Lena. I did not like to speak about it, for I always blush when I remember it.

Dolly. What ?

Lena. Well, you know, there was the great man called the minister.

Dolly. Does he preach ?

Lena. Oh, no ! he is one of the men that see the king. Well, and there was another great man, who sat on a higher chair. And there were the great scholars, —and poor, miserable-looking men many of them are— and all the boys in their uniforms, sitting on the steps of a very broad, but not very high, wooden stair. And boy after boy came, and got some prize ; but I could not see Frank. So I began to think he had turned unwell, or that the great man had been informed by the door-keeper that I was up in the loft, and that I was not so well dressed as the great ladies. I don't know what I did not think ; but I do know that I found myself leaning over a sort of thing like the front of the

pulpit in the church, if it was only long enough to go round the church; and I had said something, and everybody was looking.

Dolly. What ever took you there?

Lena. I don't know. I must have gone over some people's heads.

Dolly. What had you said?

Lena. I don't know.

Dolly. Were they angry?

Lena. No; they did not say they were. Mrs. St. Victor would never let me say I had made a fool of myself. Mr. Hall said it was quite right, and he wished more would feel the same sort of way. But all the excuse I could ever find for myself was, that I was very much excited when I heard Frank's name; and I had been tired, and my head had ached with the long speeches I could not understand.

Dolly. Did they speak about Frank?

Lena. I don't know what they spoke about. But although I did not like to listen, and, indeed, could make nothing of it, I did so much enjoy looking at the boys as they walked up so bright for their prizes, always looking up in the direction where they knew their mothers were.

Dolly. None of them would look so nice as Frank.

Lena. Well, I did not see how he looked. It was then that I lost myself.

Thus these two good women talked of the great world at a distance. There is something peculiarly

attractive about them. There is Lena's sincerity as to her secret. She was far enough away from Mrs. St. Victor. She might have told Dolly with all safety. Dolly would never tell anybody anything that would do Lena harm. But God was near. His voice was in Lena's conscience ; and she felt that the pledge to Mrs. St. Victor had been a vow to Him. May there grow up more like unto Lena in this respect ! Then there was Dolly, whose goodness had detected the evil she had almost forced upon Lena by her curiosity. She listened to the low questioning in her own heart, and ceased questioning Lena. Had she persisted, Lena might have sinned ; for she would have felt that she had broken a vow to God, and that would have been to her earnest, honest heart a grievous sin. How often do we make our brothers and our sisters to sin ! And had she been less good than she was, Dolly might have taken offence at Lena's reserve, and thus a rill of evil would have flowed in between two good hearts, and it would have widened and deepened most probably. But it did not, because Dolly was good and wise.

And then their common love for Frank. Lena, because she was his mother, and her heart's own Frank had been his father. Dolly, because she had a loving heart, and, perhaps, because she had a son along with his father in the bosom of the Great Father.

They were talking of the great world at a distance. Does the great world often talk as they did ?



CHAPTER XXVI.

THE first prize in Latin verse had been a real royal crown to Frank, even though its gold was not so shiny as Dolly White could have wished it. Henceforth his school-fellows did homage to his superiority. They owned the sovereignty of his character; the force of his will controlled them.

Frank's ideas about the future began to become more complicated. It was not now so simple a thing to shape a career which had commenced with such a blaze of brilliancy. He was not by any means conscious of the change. Young men, whose heads turn as they rise in the world, never think themselves so simple and so humble as when they are completely eyes behind and feet before. The fool's eyes are in the back of his head. But the fool had no firm foothold in Frank Miller. He spoke to himself at this time in this wise :— ' I shall still

be faithful in my heart to my country ; but Fortune, whose praises are sung by all the poets, ancient and modern, who is humbly sought by all men, old and young, able and feeble, is not to be spurned when she comes courting the poor son of a dead Swiss guide.'

There was a subtlety of vanity in this self-depreciation ; but Frank was not at all conscious of it.

The outward deportment of the young gentleman was in harmony with this inward state. It was no longer necessary to urge him to dress in the very front of the fashion. Claude had his own to do in taking care of his clothes and brushing his boots.

Frank was much on horseback. His foot was put into the stirrup with a grace. You would have thought that his horse itself liked the whip as he used it. If any one did not know him to look at, it was pretty safe to tell him to select the finest horse that rode along the Champs Elysées to the Bois de Boulogne, and conclude that it was ridden by Frank Miller.

Mr. Hall was a close observer of all this ; but he knew the main forces of Frank's nature, and how to take advantage of them, and he acted accordingly. He operated upon Frank through his well-established love of work. Next to this was the irrepressible ardour of the youth's character ; and next again, his ambition. Ignorance and idleness would work ruin in such a nature. He was pretty well out of danger of these two.

Mrs. St. Victor put no obstacle in the way of any one of Frank's expensive fancies. Dinner parties to his

friends, a box at the theatre, riding groups away to the Bois de Boulogne, and elegant pic-nics there, were arranged so as to meet the eager youth's loftiest notions.

But Mrs. St. Victor was not well at ease. She might be said now to lend herself to these doings of her adopted ; but she regarded them in her own heart with sadness. Frank's taking a lead in high fashion did not now rejoice her heart. Mrs. St. Victor was going through the suffering of the birth of a humble wisdom. She was becoming aware of the fact that she had sought pleasure where happiness was not to be found. How she would have liked to have another long conversation with Lena.

'I was unwise,' she said to herself. 'I acted without reflection. I could not reflect. Was I not selfish? Did I think enough of the poor mother's feelings?'

These were the thoughts of her heart when Mrs. St. Victor's better nature was in the ascendant. It was not always so, however. She would sometimes say in the fondness of her love, looking at Frank and listening to the utterances of his fine intellect—

'He cannot go and be buried alive in Schwytz. His proper mother has adopted him. Paris alone will let him have scope.'

At these moments Mrs. St. Victor regretted the long conversation with Lena ; and the fallacious argument that different circumstances alter the case in a case like hers was then strong within her. But the still small voice of conscience was continuous, however loud these

voices of the fitful moods might speak. If Mrs. St. Victor had at first devoted herself to a life of active benevolence, it might have been very different with her now. Had she loved Frank with the heart of beneficence, she might now have been rejoicing in the fruits of her good work. But her love had been all for herself. She was to be the great object of his worship, and he was to be the beautiful and richly-decked and endowed victim of the sacrifice. And Mrs. St. Victor was mercifully defeated.

But no shadow of a thought ever dawned upon her of withholding her affection and her wealth from Frank ; and she certainly would never seek out another to displace him in her purifying love.

Another brilliant year came to its garnished close. Frank at the University classes experienced the truth of the proverb that success begets success. His place at college was an honour to his place at school ; but I cannot linger over the incidents and details of its record.

The immaterial crown on his head now shed very gladdening rays on the heart of Mrs. St. Victor.

Frank was now received among his friends as the accomplished heir to a large and wealthy estate. All reference to his origin was eschewed ; so much so, that it would be difficult to discern that he ever remembered it himself. If he ever thought of Schwytz, it was of himself as kindly aiding in its highest councils ; and it is difficult to say that his thoughts ought to have stooped lower. His fortune and his education warranted higher

flights. In very fact, he as frequently anticipated himself giving money to the clergyman of his parish in aid of the poor, as arranging the finances of the Swiss canton.

Mr. Hall tracked the workings of Frank's spirit with the keen scent and far sight of a Red Indian hunter. He smiled at the kite-like soarings of his imagination. He tied down his intellect to accuracy of scholarship. He waited for the results of time, and was well assured they would be good.

Mrs. St. Victor's friends had their varying opinion or say about her conduct.

'She has acted nobly,' said some.

'This boy will lead her a weary dance all her silently miserable life,' said others.

When the college session closed, some of Frank's friends resolved upon a holiday on the Pyrenees, and and over them to Spain. Frank entered into the project with ardour.

'Let us go,' he said, 'to Iberia, the lovely land of the Cid.'

He mentioned his intention to Mrs. St. Victor, but he never thought of consulting her about the proposal. An objection by her to anything he made up his mind to would have had a strange and distant sound in his ears. It was so long since he had heard such a thing. But the strange sound was heard. It was not distant. It was near. It was sweet.

'I have other plans for your holidays, my dear son,' she said, 'and I don't for a moment doubt that you will

own their superiority to those of your friends. I mean to visit Switzerland along with you.'

'Switzerland, mother!' exclaimed Frank, and possibly he could not have told which mother was smiling in his heart at the moment, although certainly the word was addressed to his adoptive mother.

'I did not see as much of Switzerland as I should have liked. I wish to know the features of the country with more of the intimacy of a personal acquaintance; and I could not procure a better guide than you, dear. But our pleasure would be incomplete if Mr. Hall did not go with us; and I think William has a right to expect that we should take him.' Such were a few of the details of Mrs. St. Victor's plan.

'Capital!' cried Frank, grateful and admiring. 'It is so like your kindness. I don't know what to think most of, your courage or your kindness; for I know you are not by nature as bold as a lion.'

'I should not have much to fear in the company of the son of Frank Miller, the bravest and best of guides,' responded Mrs. St. Victor. Now, this was something decidedly new; and oh! it was so noble, as it appeared to Frank, for he was still all himself. The journey to the Pyrenees might have consummated the folly and evil of vanity and fashion. This proposal to visit his country, and above all, the generous recalling of the name of a father whose memory he adored, were voices from on high crying a halt to a career of flippancy and unprofitable regrets.

Frank replied from his heart, and with his eyes as well as all the other organs of expression and speech—

‘And I hope you will not.’ He proceeded in a different strain:—‘We shall modify Mr. Hall’s estimate of his native Dauphiné. He has seen nothing finer than it yet. Shall we go direct to Schwytz?’

‘No,’ answered Mrs. St. Victor; ‘it shall be the end of our journey.’

The Pyrenean project was never again mentioned between Frank and his adoptive mother. He put the journey off with his friends, and they went without him, although they would have been very glad to have had his company.

Mr. Hall was invited to dinner on the very day on which the conversation took place in which his name was mentioned. Frank was radiant and doubly devoted in his attentions.

‘Have you written that translation from Horace in rhyme, as you proposed?’ asked Mr. Hall.

The passage referred to was the third Ode of the third book of the Odes, commencing—

‘*Justum ac tenacem propositi virum.*’

‘I have not, indeed,’ replied Frank, laughing. ‘I have something better than Horace to think of and tell you of. We are going to Switzerland, and we are going to drag you away from wisdom and learning, to see a finer country than Dauphiné could be made into.’

‘I don’t see the point of the joke,’ remarked Mr. Hall with perfect truth.

Mrs. St. Victor then said : 'We do mean to take a holiday in Switzerland, and it would be a great favour to us if you could make it convenient to accompany us. I should feel more easy about Frank and William then. That young gentleman is to be Frank's companion.'

'Of course you will come, Mr. Hall?' was asked with great earnestness by Frank.

Mr. Hall was confused and delighted. A teacher who had had no long, or at least no large holiday, for ten years could not easily be otherwise. The same round of studies taught to the idle and the diligent, the dull and the intelligent, wears holes in the texture of most men's dispositions and tempers. It was quite a new charm for Frank to behold the quiet anticipation of happiness which the eyes and all the manner of his revered teacher gave expression to. Mr. Hall accepted the invitation, and intimated how pleased he would be to go.

And Mrs. Hall was more than pleased when the husband she admired and adored came home and told her of Mrs. St. Victor's proposal.

'You are very much in need of a long holiday,' said Mrs. Hall, beaming with delight upon her husband.

'You will manage the children, I dare say,' was the reply, rather absently and anxiously uttered.

'Listen to my excellent lord,' cried Mrs. Hall, fairly laughing out at him. 'And do you seriously think now that you discharge the duties of house-keeping in addition to all your learned and generous labours?'

'I did not mean that,' said the crest-fallen scholar.

'Oh! I know what you meant,' said his wife. 'You meant only to express the anxiety you would feel about us because you love us. And we shall think of you, you may be sure. But go, and stay away as long as Mrs. St. Victor shall wish. I shall remove sadness every morning by thinking of the good you are getting.'

'You are as kind as you are beautiful and true, my love,' said Mr. Hall, as ardent a lover of his wife as ever he had been. And that is saying a great deal. For before he won her all to himself, by manly, straightforward wooing, his love had had a considerable amount of the consuming fire in it.

'Not so beautiful with my six children,' said Mrs. Hall, looking proudly at the youngest.

'Yes! more beautiful every one you bear,' objected her husband, and he believed it.

'And not so kind as you may be inclined to call it,' continued the really beautiful woman. 'For you know it oils the temper a little to leave the books behind. When I feel myself getting crusty, I go and take a long walk. It is not good for a woman to be always in the house. She begins to get too wise in her own conceit.'

'Now that is meant for me,' interrupted Mr. Hall.

'Not at all, my dear,' said his wife seriously. 'And women always indoors begin to turn foolish about their children,' she continued. 'They think there are no children like theirs. And they are very ready to say so.'

‘You don’t,’ said her admiring husband.

‘Well, I will not flatter either myself or them, or my best of darling husbands at this particular moment. And I will say,’ was uttered very seriously by Mrs. Hall, ‘that I have wished for some time you might enjoy just the holiday Mrs. St. Victor proposes. You are too good to be unreasonably cross. But I have observed lately that the struggle to feel and to look amiable has been greater than it should be in your gentle, wise heart.’

‘Teaching irritates the brain so much,’ remarked Mr. Hall apologetically. ‘I often think it is a pity to see an old man teaching. He must either have suffered such an amount of brain-waste as would almost make a man dangerous, or his work must sit too lightly on him for his pupils’ good.’

‘They do not all take their work to heart so much as you, dear,’ said Mrs. Hall, and she turned away to look after getting her husband’s clothes and other necessities put in order.

There are wives who object to their husbands’ getting a holiday, even when they cannot possibly be taken with them. Let such consider Mrs. Hall’s conduct and reasons, and it may save them from many an unpleasant word and look. There are husbands who think their wives should always, or almost always, be found inventing something new to do at home. They think a wife who is seen going her rounds out of doors every day, must be a little neglectful of home duties. Mr.

Hall had never any reason to complain of Mrs. Hall's neglect. And no lady in Paris walked so much or attended more particularly to every little article that Mr. Hall's money paid for. Your housewife who sends for all that is needed for the house does not suit men in circumstances like Mr. Hall's.

But love was lord of all in their household.

Mrs. St. Victor was anxious to do something to lighten the expense of Mr. Hall's preparations for the journey. But she did not know how to do it. It was so difficult, she thought, to mention such a thing to a man of his pride and manly independence. At the same time, she felt that it really was her duty to do something. She mentioned the matter to Frank, and he thought and said that her thoughts were quite as they should be, and, indeed, as he had always found them in anything involving true-hearted kindness. But Frank would not for the world mention the matter to his beloved master. He thought Mrs. St. Victor ought to call on Mrs. Hall. He knew there would be no nonsense. And he knew that Mrs. Hall would never mention to her husband anything that would annoy him. Mrs. St. Victor called. The matter was easily settled. Mrs. Hall was direct and just. She felt it no humiliation to accept Mrs. St. Victor's kindness. She knew also that if Mr. Hall should flash up a little at first, his good sense would come to the rescue. It was no humiliation for them in their circumstances to accept money for such a purpose from Mrs. St. Victor who was so rich, and, as Mrs. Hall

honestly said to herself, who was under so many obligations to her husband.

So Mrs. St. Victor left more money than was necessary for a very sufficient and handsome tourist's outfit for the gentlemanly scholar.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE only question that now remained to be settled, was on what day exactly they would commence their journey. Mrs. St. Victor ordered travelling suits for the two young gentlemen exactly alike. Frank submitted even to the unnecessary Alpenstock, according to ideas formerly expressed by himself with great contempt for all who had to depend on such an artificial limb. He was right then, because he was more natural than now. The long stick tipped with iron is one of the vanities of fashion.

All was got ready, and on an August evening, at eight o'clock, they set off for Basel. Claude and Catherine were, of course, indispensable. We have heard so little of Catherine lately, that we have been in danger of thinking she had slipped out of the family as well as out of the story. But no such thing. Catherine had faithfully fulfilled her promise to help Mrs. St. Victor with Frank.

Some people make a boast of never falling asleep in a railway train any more than in church. Frank and William had speedy occasion to prove that the one-half of the boast could not be theirs with truth. At first

they had so much to see and to say, that they threatened to keep themselves and everybody else awake. But in an hour the two ornaments of the university were both fast asleep. They are easily forgiven. The night was dark outside. The light was dim inside. And the journey from Paris to Basel by Mulhouse is not very interesting even on the brightest days.

In the morning Frank was well slept, and said so.

'I have only done one sum in my head all night,' said the mathematical William, and he meant the statement of this fact to intimate that he had slept very soundly.

Mr. Hall was under no necessity of making the same avowal of human weakness. He had a railway guide in his hands all night, and he looked as if he was taking the profoundest interest in its literature. But as Homer gave an occasional nod, so Mr. Hall took a seasonable nap.

Mr. Hall had a History of England with him besides. At least he had a volume or two of the eloquent and elaborate Mr. Froude's History of the Tudor period. He made several attempts next morning to get Frank and William to listen to some choice passages from it, but nature was in the way of literary art this time. The imagination of the two young students claimed for the nonce to rank higher than their understanding. Mountains, lakes, and castles, and cottages, and these last getting more and more Swiss every mile, were not to be neglected for any book. And certainly not for an English book,



They set off for Basel.—Page 212.

whose beauties were still veiled under a good many difficulties to both. They had studied English, and made great advances in a knowledge of it. Had they been travelling in England, it would have been a different thing. But the English language must stand out of the way of a Swiss cottage,—to William for the novelty of the thing, to Frank, from dear and tender memories.

They arrived at Basel. Claude and Catherine stayed at the station to look after the luggage. The four travellers entered the omnibus of the hotel of the 'Three Kings,' and proceeded to partake of its accommodation and comforts without any delay.

The proprietor of all the consequence of the 'Three Kings,' knew by instinct who was the important personage of the group. He and his servants, accordingly, paid the profoundest respect to Mrs. St. Victor. A room on the first floor, overlooking the Rhine, was immediately assigned to her as an entire, although temporary, possession. A sitting room it was, of course. The young gentlemen were out on the balcony in a twinkling. There was a romantic tent-looking awning over the balcony. William had never seen anything so fine in the whole course of his life. He fairly shook with admiration.

'Wait a bit, though,' said Frank with a somewhat boyish chuckle. 'This is all very fine. But don't suppose you are at your journey's end yet. Don't run so fast. There is no saying what you will be like by and bye.'

Mr. Hall set at once to a study of the old historical city. The dulness which reigns in the streets along the river had no deadening effect upon him, zealous antiquarian that he was. The sight of the cathedral silenced him. It looked so sacred. It had consecrated so many ages of hopeful sufferers and struggling brave ones. There is a platform near some of the ruined cloisters. Mr. Hall seated himself reverently upon it. He looked before and behind. The work of men, and the works of God, were great and good in his eyes as he sat on that platform. The surrounding country seemed to him a place for blessed souls to rest in. Away to his right was the Black Forest. To the left, the Vosges Mountains. All the hills, as well as the walls of the city, were reflected in the deep-flowing Rhine before him. Mr. Hall, on this natural platform or terrace, shaded by the ever-living walnut trees, forgot amiable admirers of his who were waiting at the 'Three Kings,' till he should come and allow them to enjoy their dinner. It was past the time, and the two boys at least were ravenously hungry. When he did condescend to accommodate himself to human weakness, he was both surprised and amazed to find how long he had kept them waiting.

Mr. Hall said at dinner :—' Since I am charged with some of the responsibility of making this journey instructive as well as entertaining, I must on no account fail to take you all to the picture-gallery. What would any one think of me in such a capacity if I failed to bring under your notice some of the finest works of H. Meibin ?'

Mr. Hall's proposal was hailed with all the eagerness and respect due to the wise arrangement of so learned an enthusiast. William had a considerable amount of artistic taste as well as of mathematical talent. And he was especially gratified with the anticipation of seeing some of the finest works of Holbein.

It was an early dinner. As soon as it was over, Mr. Hall and the two students were on their way to the picture-gallery. Mrs. St. Victor was a little tired, and did not go. She had seen it before.

At two o'clock exactly, the tutor and the two students from Paris were trudging the narrow, winding streets which lead up to the great collection of paintings, of which Basel has such reason to be proud.

Mr. Hall had never been at it before, and when he came to the foot of a stair of two hundred steps, and that immediately after dinner, he almost began to invent learned reasons for putting off the evil day. Frank and William were inclined to be amused with the consequences of a hearty dinner upon the grave and learned scholar. But up he rose, puffing as he stepped. Everything has an end in this world, and these stairs have a head or top. At the stair-head which leads to the picture-gallery of Basel, Mr. Hall looked back with complacency and breathlessness at the difficulties human nature could overcome after all—including dinner in the all.

Mr. Hall knew quite well that one visit was never enough to any sanctuary of art. This one would assuredly exact numerous visits. Many an excellent work

of art he was obliged to pass over, because time would go on in the galleries of art-collections as well as in places less divine. But the drawings and paintings of the illustrious Holbein had all to be looked at this once at any rate. They stood a long time in the presence of his 'Passion of the Saviour.' The 'Dead Christ,' and the portrait of Luther, immortal works from the pencil of Holbein, were duly gazed upon and admired by Mr. Hall and his wards for the time. Frank and William were amused with the great number of portraits of Holbein painted by himself, to make quite sure of being as immortal as his canvas at least.

Frank got tired of the pictures, and began to wish to be out in the air, and to look at the Rhine. Mr. Hall wished only to look at one more painting which he said was the most famous work of art in the world. It was the 'Dance of the Dead.'

The sepulchral name does not describe this masterpiece. The two young gentlemen took a long and lively interest in it. Mr. Hall indicated the points of art and of instruction to be remembered. And even to youths of fifteen there was much to awaken grave attention. It shows Death unexpectedly surprising men. They are transfixed in attitudes they cannot alter. Death seems to make sport of them. It touches them with its bony, icy hand. It seems to be inviting them to dance. Business, pleasure, all things yield to Death's invitation. They seem as if they felt that follow it they must, willingly or unwillingly.

Mr. Hall was very much inclined to deliver a philosophical harangue over this picture. It was full of texts for a lecture on moral philosophy. But he was not a man to make wisdom distasteful. So a few well-chosen remarks were all they had to endure. And they would not have taken any interest in many more.

Mrs. St. Victor was sitting out on the balcony when they returned. She was listening to the waves of the river. Or, perhaps, it would be more accurate to say, that the river's murmur was keeping up a low monotonous accompaniment to her thoughts. She was not conscious of listening to anything. Nor of looking at anything. She was not even saying anything to her own spirit, which was being saddened by the gladdening growth of wisdom.

When Mr. Hall stepped on to the balcony and began to make excuses for keeping the young gentlemen away for three hours, Mrs. St. Victor was made aware of how long she must have sat in this day-dream. When a nature like Mrs. St. Victor's begins to be forgetful of herself in this manner, she is in a healthy frame of mind. The great evil which controls such people, is their over-weening, omnipresent self. They see no scenery of which they are not a distinctive feature. They feel no interests if they are out of their centre. Mrs. St. Victor had suffered much from the tyranny of this merciless self. She was now being slowly emancipated. And the spirit of Frank Miller had had a principal share in the process of scaring her insatiable self away.

Mr. Hall had been enraptured with dingy old Basel. The Parisian scholar was also a historian. He could throw brightness upon its dull streets. He propounded a plan of visiting all the suburbs after they were tolerably well acquainted with the town, of having a look at all the neighbouring villages, and especially of making a study of every church within reach. But there was not time for all this, and Claude was already beginning to pack up their things, before they left Basel for Berne.

‘You enjoyed your visit to the gallery, I am sure,’ said Mrs. Hall to them all in a general way, at the table.

‘And the stair up to it,’ said Frank, looking slyly at Mr. Hall.

‘What a genius was that of Holbein!’ exclaimed Mr. Hall in a sort of ecstasy.

‘Was he a native of Basel?’ asked Mrs. St. Victor.

‘Neither the date nor the place of his birth is known to a certainty,’ answered Mr. Hall, brightening up, because he saw an inlet through this question to get expatiating on a favourite topic. Mr. Hall was well read in the history of art and artists. So he addressed himself to the subject in hand with a will, and continued:—

‘Augsburg and Basel contend for the honour of being the place of Holbein’s birth; but I think that Gr^unstadt, formerly the residence of the counts of Leiningen-Westerburg, has stronger claims. His father was a painter, and was the instructor of his boy. But the son soon soared away beyond his father, and attained an

eminence only next lower than that of Albert Dürer, if indeed it is lower at all.'

'He must have lived about the time of the Reformation,' remarked Frank, during a momentary pause by Mr. Hall; 'for he painted a portrait of Luther. I suppose from the life.'

'When Hans, that is John, Holbein came to Basel, he became acquainted with the learned Erasmus, and that friendship shaped the course of his subsequent life,' replied Mr. Hall not very directly to Frank's remark. But noticing the discrepancy himself, he continued: 'He was born at that great harvest of intellect and power, the end of the fifteenth century. Some assign 1498 as the date of his birth. Others put it three years earlier, and say 1495. In the latter case he would be twelve years younger than Luther, whose portrait he painted from the life.'

'Was he successful in the world as well as in his art?' asked Mrs. St. Victor.

Mr. Hall had hardly made up his mind on either question. He did not call the petting of kings and great personages success in the world, and he knew that Holbein never had done justice—had not had an opportunity of doing justice—to his own deeper, and nobler, and purer instincts as an artist. But he went on to state a number of facts which quite satisfied Mrs. St. Victor's curiosity.

'Holbein,' he said, 'painted a number of portraits of Erasmus—'

‘And not a few of himself,’ interrupted Frank ; but Mr. Hall proceeded :—

‘And that illustrious scholar gave him warm letters of recommendation to Sir Thomas More, a great statesman in England, whither Holbein went in 1526. Sir Thomas More took the German artist to his own home, and after three years he showed the fruits of his labour to the King, Henry VIII. The King, a very impulsive man, was so charmed with them that he at once retained John Holbein, or Hans Holbein as the English still call him, as the Court painter. This is a position which I should not consider one of the healthiest for a true artist ; but I have no doubt Holbein would think differently. The King’s favour made him such a rage, that he was so much engaged in painting portraits as not to find time to exercise his great talent for historical painting. He did, however, do some large works in commemoration of distinguished events of his time. There is one picture of his, Henry VIII. giving a charter to the barber-surgeons of England ; and another is, Edward VI. giving the charter for the foundation of Bridewell Hospital. Edward VI. was Henry’s son and successor.’

‘I have not heard that Albert Dürer was eminent as a portrait-painter,’ said Mrs. St. Victor.

‘It is admitted that he was not so eminent as Holbein in this branch of their great art,’ replied Mr. Hall. ‘Holbein painted equally well in oil and water-colours. He also understood and practised painting in distemper. The large scale and the miniature were both the same to

him. In portraits his feeling for nature was very refined. He was accurate in his delineation of parts ; and there was a vigour in his work which ranks him with the very first of the great masters.'

'Did he die in England?' asked Frank.

'Yes, he died in London of the plague in 1554, not by any means an old man. Only fifty-nine if we take the earliest supposed date of his birth.'

'And when did Albert Dürer live?' asked William Verny.

'A generation earlier,' replied Mr. Hall. 'He was born at Nürnberg in 1471. Poor Dürer had an unhappy end. His father was a goldsmith. He insisted on Albert, or rather Albrecht, marrying against his own inclination, the daughter of a wealthy neighbour. She was not without attractions ; but she was peevish, and prone to be jealous. And his countrymen attributed his death to the domestic misery consequent on such a disposition, especially when an artist's soul has to encounter it. Dürer died broken-hearted in 1528 in the fifty-eighth year of his age, two years after Holbein went to England.'

With such learned and profitable conversation the dinner was rendered all the more pleasant ; and Mrs. St. Victor was pleased and gratified that Mr. Hall was one of her companions.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

FRANK could have wished to go up the whole length of the valley of the Aar on foot. So he took rather ill with a railway carriage with its windows shut as closely as the exigencies of breathing would admit of, for Mrs. St. Victor was afraid of the cold. The carriage became very uncomfortable, but neither Frank nor William ever got sleepy. They economised their opportunities of observation. The one kept calling to the other to observe a pretty Swiss village, slopes of smiling verdure, a waterfall, or a flock of goats.

The youths had always their Alpenstocks with them. Mr. Hall noticed that these were sometimes in Mrs. St. Victor's way, and he suggested that they should be handed to Claude till they were needed to climb with.

Frank interpreted this into a promise that they were

to get climbing, and all the young mountaineer awoke again within him.

Mr. Hall felt that every town they rushed past was like an opportunity unimproved. He would willingly have stopped at each to inspect the relics of ages now gone from time, and holding their place as drops in the eternity that follows us up so close behind. This would have freshened up his historical lore. It would have awakened memories whose original he had forgotten, or perhaps never known.

Frank and William only wished to get forward. Young people travelling feel their hearts always on before. They are like old Time. They know no stay.

At last Berne was in sight.

The Cathedral and its surroundings made the two lads wonder. The miserable houses that crowd so close upon it made Frank remark that either these houses or the Cathedral were out of place. Mr. Hall did not know how the houses had been allowed to get so misplaced, but he seemed to know a good deal about what was there before them.

‘Formerly, this was the Cathedral burying-ground,’ remarked the learned gentleman. ‘The tombs stood all round there. Here the mourners have prayed and wept. Where we are standing, former generations have stood under the shade of venerable chestnut trees. The people and the trees are no more. But look round. What a splendid country ! These are the hills of Garten and Belpberg down the river. Further off there is the

Oberland chain. Look at the sharp peaks. Yonder is the Jungfrau. We shall make a more close acquaintance with it.'

The four travellers loitered around the Cathedral for some time, toning down their enthusiasm with a small bottle of sherbet, supplied by one of those boys in whom the mercantile spirit develops early into enterprise.

The next day they took the ordinary tourists' walk. They found Altemberg to be a mountainous array of farms and gentlemen's country seats.

Mr. Hall remarked that there were some visits of politeness due to certain venerable inhabitants of Berne. Frank at once thought of Miss Nordyn, and the painful memories of his visit of politeness to her awoke certain apprehensions within him.

'A visit of politeness is anything but pleasant, sir,' he said to Mr. Hall.

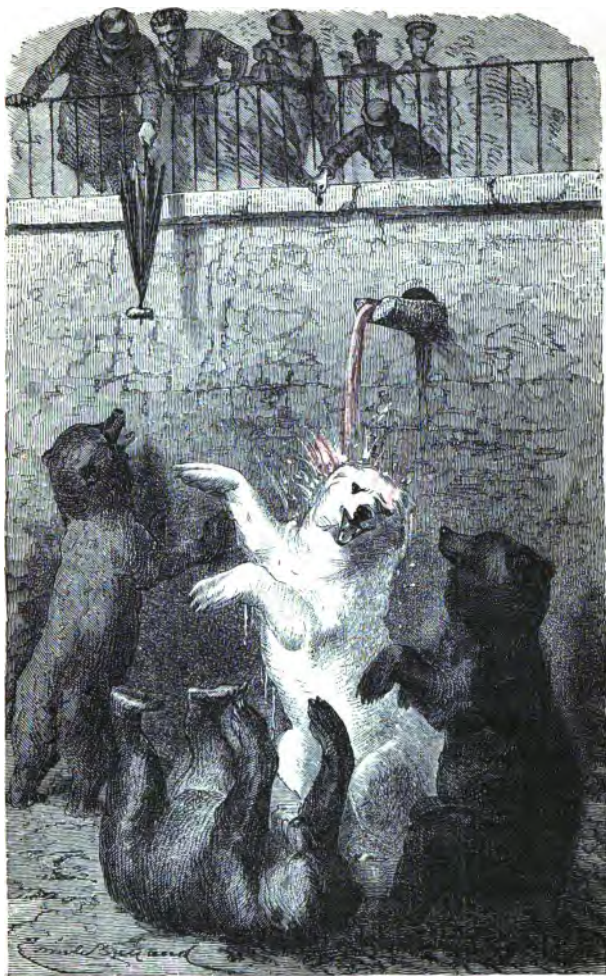
'Not always,' was Mr. Hall's reply, and he remembered Miss Nordyn when Frank spoke and looked alarmed.

'We have had nothing but pleasure from following Mr. Hall's plans thus far,' remarked William.

'I know that,' said Frank. 'Shall we have to dress?'

'A traveller is excused from much of what is called dressing at home. You seem to me very well dressed,' said Mr. Hall, and Mrs. St. Victor looked pleased.

They had got as far as the Schanzli by this time, and the children who were sitting out in the sun, some at their lessons, some at their seams, all beautifying the



It took a douche bath.—Page 228.

landscape, and none of them disturbing the holy silence, led Mrs. St. Victor to reflect, that there were scenes and circumstances in life which had some advantages over the drawing-rooms of Paris. Hence they found their way to the pit and the bears of Berne.

‘These are the venerable inhabitants of Berne I was thinking of,’ said Mr. Hall, and he evidently thought he had cracked a very good joke. Frank was relieved. Anybody, or any bear, but no Miss Nordyn for him. Mrs. St. Victor enjoyed Mr. Hall’s schoolmaster-like joke.

The pit was four-sided and roomy. The bears were in good humour. One of them had put itself under a jet of water which flowed into the pit, and seemed to wish the other bears and the people above to understand that it was at its toilette, and rather liked it. It splashed itself all over with its fore-paws. And it used the one paw to wash the other. After this it took a douche-bath as a final operation. It seemed a decidedly happy bear. It was the favourite with the audience, or rather the spectators above. The martinet, after his toilette, began to toil for bread. He was fond of bread. He went through some bearish forms of coaxing, and looked not so clumsy after all. The antics were in harmony with his make and looks at all events.

A retired merchant was standing there industriously feeding all the bears, and this one in particular. He was there when our party came up, and they left him there. His pockets seemed bottomless, and they had all been

filled besides what was in his hat, and what he brought in his hands.

Frank and William vied with each other in endeavouring to throw bits of bread on the top of a thick pole, for which the bear who was fortunate enough to get first would climb, and it would balance itself to look for more. Mrs. St. Victor seemed much amused.

Mr. Hall did not let this opportunity slip unimproved.

‘Have you not observed,’ he asked, ‘that there are bears carved on all the public buildings in Berne? They are a favourite animal with the Bernese citizens.’

‘I noticed some, but not so particularly as to ask why,’ replied Frank.

‘Bears are the city arms,’ said Mr Hall. ‘They hold it as one of their proudest traditions, that Prince Berthold killed a bear on the spot where he afterwards began to raise fortifications in defence of his subjects. I shall show you at one of the gates an inscription which recalls this fact. The Bernese have a special fondness for bears. They dug and built this square pit to accommodate them, as well as to exhibit them. They must always, according to their belief, have some bears in their city. These bears are more fortunate than some individuals of my acquaintance. There is capital sunk for their behoof, and it yields about thirty pounds a year. I suspect it is ample for all their wants.’

Frank and William were anxious to assume their Alpine walking-sticks from this point of their journey.

But Mrs. St. Victor was impatient to get forward to Thun, and she would not let her travelling companions out of her sight at that rate.

They travelled the next stage in an open carriage. When Frank and William saw the banks of the Lake of Thun, they did not regret that they had ridden up the valley to it. They would enjoy roaming along its edges as they were more than if they had tired themselves with walking. They looked so gay that they set Mr. Hall reflecting on the happy days of boyhood.

Mr. Hall's historical lore was not heeded by the two youths so much as he would have liked. What did they care, on the banks of the beautiful Thun, to hear of dukes and counts who had successively possessed themselves of some strong castle or fertile country? The lake, the steamer on it, the yachts,—these were all the objects they cared to see, or hear about.

Schwytz was not so far off now. Mrs. St. Victor felt this, and she could hardly have told how the fact or the feeling affected her. In this moody frame of mind, she proposed a sojourn at Thun for a few days.

Here, then, rested for the present these four. They sailed the lake, and sallied forth into the country. How fresh the mornings were! Our travellers went out to look for the rising sun. The sun-sets were glorious as are the last moments of some beneficent hero who is sinking into his grave, because he has heard the summons to come up into the presence of the Father, who is waiting to smile upon him in another land.

They sailed up to Interlachen, and there they took quarters at the Jungfrau hotel.

'Look up,' said Frank to William with a sort of reverent tone of voice. 'These are the heights of the Jungfrau. It is the finest mountain that ever protected a valley.'

The Jungfrau looked at that moment worthy of the enthusiasm of the young and patriotic Swiss heart which found its utterance in these words. Its green zones wore a robe of emerald. Its snows were a white satin mantle sparkling with gems. Mrs. St. Victor forgot her real or imaginary ills for a little, as she looked at the Jungfrau.

Mr. Hall underwent a great transformation. For the first time on that journey, if not on the whole journey of life since he was two years old, he could not speak. He was silenced in the presence of majesty. His eyes were dazzled. His lips were put under a spell.

Frank roused him out of it by asking if he did not think they might be allowed now to ask their Alpenstocks from Claude. It was time. Mr. Hall felt that it would be as malicious as it was imprudent to refuse them when the sky was so sweet and calm, and the hearts of the youths so buoyant.

Next day Mrs. St. Victor purchased for the two students chamois-leather leggings, and a green ribbon was tied round their gray felt hats. They had their long-coveted walking-sticks in their hands, and to have seen them, you would have said they were equal to climbing exploits of various moral as well as material kinds.

Mr. Hall was studying the faces of the people of Interlachen.

'Have you not observed,' he asked in his tutorial tones, 'that all the faces here have an expression of calm and contentment upon them? One sees it nowhere else. It looks as if suffering, grief, sadness, and annoyances of all descriptions were banished from this little nook of the earth.'

Mr. Hall's enthusiasm had, no doubt, slightly affected his usually accurate eye. The ostlers don't always look as Mr. Hall seemed to imagine. And the unfortunate coach-drivers, in the busy season, have their own peculiar annoyances, sadnesses, griefs, and sufferings in abundance. But perhaps Mr. Hall had not extended his observations to stables and stage-coaches.

It will be perfectly safe to regard Mr. Hall's remark as descriptive of an observation he was not much in the habit of making. The good man was not very introspective. This is something wonderful, considering his studious habits. But his life was that of a teacher fully as much as a student. Mr. Hall had never had much time for moping over himself and his moods of mind. Nor had he tried to spend time accounting for his occasional restfulness of heart, notwithstanding all his many real anxieties about those for whose minds and souls he felt himself responsible as their tutor. So he was not looking in, and he thought he had seen something in the people's faces which was really in his own heart. So true is it that great souls project themselves

upon all they encounter. The apostle Paul groaned and longed for that higher character among men, of which his great Master's life and death had been both a preparation and a prediction. He saw this going on outside of himself. His spirit flew out and brooded over the face of nature. And he said, 'The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now,' after telling us, that 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.'

Such are the reflections which even the mistakes and the slightest possible tinge of pedantry, in a man like Mr. Hall, awaken in the minds of those who are privileged with the acquaintance of such a man.

'I think they look stupid rather than calm,' remarked Frank, after reflecting on Mr. Hall's sapient observation.

'The stillness of the absence of life rather than the rest which the presence of power gives,' was Mrs. St. Victor's refinement.

'And yet I think,' said William, who did not often speak, but was one of the best of listeners, 'that they must have fewer sadnesses and cares than people are exposed to who live in large and busy cities. In Paris, for example, new wants are created. The people here have never heard of many of the luxuries which the poorest Parisians think so necessary that they would expect to die if they were deprived of them. And the fewer wants people feel, the more of the original calm of nature there must be left within them.'

Spoken like the young philosopher William was, these remarks let Mr. Hall softly down.

‘I prefer the intensity of Parisian life, however,’ said Mrs. St. Victor.

‘And the people here, I have no doubt, decidedly prefer the quietness of Interlachen,’ added Mr. Hall.

‘They look as if they would be very far from home in Paris,’ added William.

Frank had no further remark to make. Indeed, he had been biting his lips since he spoke last. What right had he, he said to himself, to be calling his countrymen stupid?



CHAPTER XXIX.



R. HALL had no idea, when he consented to this halt for a few days at Interlachen, that Frank, and William, and he, were to be toned down into very tame individuals resting from the toil of their easy stages. It was none of the good tutor's intention either to offer his arm all day to Mrs. St. Victor for gentle and respectable promenading. He had an idea that each of all the four had a right to choose his own line of pleasure. But he had no occasion to make any demonstration in favour of individual liberty as against social restraint. For on that very day Frank began to talk of a visit to the Grindelwald glacier. This is considered one of the best points from which to see the Jungfrau. Its beauty from this point is very striking, for it is just sufficiently distant to be rendered mellow. Mrs. St. Victor made no objection, and Mr. Hall had no occasion to ventilate his doctrine of liberty. Mr. Hall was highly delighted with the prospect of standing on a real Swiss glacier.

Frank and William, equipped as before described, and Mr. Hall suitably dressed and provided also with an Alpenstock, set off next morning at seven o'clock.

There was something so magnificent in that morning's appearance, that one regrets the disuse of old classical modes of description. It would have been quite a relief to be allowed to speak of Aurora arrayed in her most resplendent grandeur, showing the wideness of the regions of her sway, and evidently making one of her many attempts to gladden the heart of Tithonus under his load of age and immortality.

After this, to say that the morning was surpassingly fine, sounds rather feeble. Well, there was nothing feeble in the three pilgrims to the Grindelwald glacier.

The road from Interlachen to Grindelwald is itself worthy of a visit to Switzerland. A torrent roars for a portion of the way to entertain the tourist. He hears it roar. Then it groans as he leaves it behind. Then it murmurs in its wildness and its loneliness.

Rising from its bed are the patient sides of mountains. They seem so thankful for the sunshine. And they brave the storm so steadily, and have never been known to be crushed by any power outside of themselves.

Green meadows stretch away into the distance, right and left, at certain parts of this road from Interlachen to Grindelwald. Their carpet is of the same hue as the emerald skirts of the mountains. And they are all dotted with Swiss cottages.

Flocks of goats are the principal living things which move under the eye of the traveller. If he has been accustomed to contemplate the sheep-walks of less

rugged lands, he has not always seen pastures so green. And if he has seen a lamb, or even a dam or a ram breathing its mute and patient latest breath, after stumbling and falling over a height of no great descent or danger, he will not need to ask why the Swiss shepherd finds goats more manageable than sheep.

Along the road our travellers were walking with all the spring of health and early morning air. The appearance of surrounding objects changes by and bye. The route becomes less easy. The surrounding scenery begins to look stern. It presently gets grim and gruff, and ceases altogether to smile. The low growl of the avalanche begins to be heard. And when the traveller begins to be aware of this growl's being prolonged by degrees till it becomes almost constant, then he knows that he has reached the liquid solidity of a glacier. When our three travellers felt that they had advanced thus far, they said each separately to himself that one dear wish of his heart had been gratified.

It was an object of ambition gained.

However powerful any imagination may be, there is beauty and grandeur in nature which it cannot forecast. Frank, as true a Swiss at heart as ever breathed the freedom of the air of the mountains, was mute as he gazed at the glistening Alpine peaks of ice. Both in body and in spirit he was above the clouds. In point of fact he saw the clouds beneath his feet. He laboured in his breathing as if the air were too pure for the goodness of a spirit tied for a period of doom to conditions

of earthy flesh and blood. And the roar of the avalanche was now like the voice of the Almighty. Frank was awed in the presence of the greatness of the works of God.

After a while he could speak. 'We have not been disappointed,' he said. 'The Jungfrau is seen from here in all its beauty.'

'Yes! it was necessary to come thus far,' replied Mr. Hall. 'This seems like a grand stand erected by the Creator, and itself worthy of its relation to that glorious work of His.'

Mr. Hall kept glancing from the glacier to the mountain, and then to the eager looks of his two ardent companions. As he looked at these last he began to feel the responsibility that was on him as having the charge of two such precious lives. They seemed to Mr. Hall the most beautiful works of God just then within the reach of his eye. He felt that there might be dangers in coming down from the Grindelwald which they had not had to encounter as they clambered up. But his fears had no realization. And deep thankfulness took possession of the good man's heart.

The Staubbach is one of the majestic features of the Grindelwald. It is the highest waterfall in Europe. It seemed to Frank at first to be nothing but a slight cloud of white foam balanced on the breaths of air above. This cascade is like no other of all the wonderfully varied family of waterfalls.

'It would please Mrs. St. Victor to see that,' cried

Frank. 'There is no noise ! Isn't that wonderful ? And isn't it beautiful ?'

The sight of the Staubbach put out the sense of the progress of time in all our three adventurers. They stood for hours. Frank and William admired it with all the intensity of boyish abandon.

Mr. Hall set himself to analyse its beauties.

A boy came up to them, and proposed to fire a cannon in honour of their visit. His real object was to get something from them for letting them hear the triple echo of the Staubbach. He fired, and three distinct responses of echo answered.

They all gave him something to himself, and he fired again to thank them.

As they began to move on they came upon another boy who was proud of his possession of a very large trumpet. He did not seem to have any idea of looking for anything for blowing it. He blew it for very love of his trump and the Ranz des Vaches, which he produced very tolerably indeed. It was Frank who asked him for this tune, which we know he could sing when he was so young. The Ranz des Vaches was played back again by echo flying from rock to mountain. They gratified the artist very much with liberal pay.

All the pleasures were under the auspices of the most brilliant weather. And the air was scented with Switzerland's own most balmy perfume.

They came on to a Swiss cottage. The outward signs of an inn, or Alpine public-house, were not unwelcome.

They felt as if an amiable invitation was being pressed upon them by an hospitable stranger. From the balcony of this place of refreshment, they could still get a view of the Staubbach. They ordered such a luncheon as gave the host a very high idea of their rank, and he was a man who knew the world. Most people in similar circumstances do, or think they do.

‘What a holiday this has been !’ remarked William, after they were seated round the well-furnished table. ‘I shall never forget it.’

‘I hope it is not the last we shall have together,’ was Frank’s response.

Time moved on, and so must they. They took the road to Interlachen refreshed and merry. When they came back to the torrent, the Lauterbrunnen, its accents sounded much more cheerful. It was the thoughts within them which had sweetened its tones.

Mrs. St. Victor listened to all they had to tell with evident interest and pleasure. They had still three days of such walks to look forward to in this neighbourhood.

Mr. Hall did not let the opportunity slip of arranging on the ground itself the ideas which the two young gentlemen had acquired from their geography lessons and maps.

‘We are,’ he said, ‘at present among the Bernese Alps.’

‘I know that,’ said Frank a little impetuously, as if his native air were beginning to revive his Swiss manners.

‘But I am glad Mr. Hall has mentioned it,’ said William. ‘For I must confess I had not the idea clearly before my mind that we were among the Bernese Alps, even though we were so lately in Berne.’

‘We are in the canton of Berne,’ said Mr. Hall. And Frank, native and all as he is, and has reason to be proud that he is, will be none the worse of attending a little to details.’

‘I beg your pardon,’ said Frank. ‘I am sure I shall be delighted to have my sense of where I am made more direct.’

‘It is what I am extremely anxious for,’ said Mrs. St. Victor.

‘The Bernese Alps, we all know,’ resumed Mr. Hall, ‘are the northern side of the valley of the Rhone. Their most elevated edge is parallel to the course of that river. The Grimsel ridge is their eastern extremity. And over it a mule road leads from the valley of Hasli to that of the Rhone. The highest part of this road is 8300 feet above the level of the sea.’

Frank was listening to Mr. Hall with an eagerness which reminded the good gentleman that the Schreckhorn was not far from the Grimsel ridge. Mr. Hall knew his thoughts, and loved the boy more deeply for thinking of his father so fondly. At the same time, Frank’s sorrow could not in the nature of things be so poignant as to occasion any unseemly demonstration of it, so he went on to say :—

‘The Grimsel is to the east of the Schreckhorn. Not

far. And the valley under the Schreckhorn is now reaping in its prosperity benefits dearly purchased by three honourable families.'

Mrs. St. Victor was pleased with Mr. Hall's ranking the guide's family with those of the Scottish gentlemen who had perished along with Frank's father. And she added—

'We are reaping benefit too, who do not live in the valley.'

'I am, and so is my mother,' said Frank quite unaffectedly.

'We all are,' interposed Mr. Hall with a tone of decision. 'It is one of the mysterious ways of God. Death is one of his principal means of grace. War, and it means violent death to thousands, has been the great instrument of civilisation. And salvation was only possible through a death, which is the most mysterious event in history. So also in the fortunes of families. The wheel of fortune is poised upon death as its pivot. And it was the death of that brave guide which occasioned the present happiness of each of us four.'

After a pause Mrs. St. Victor asked, 'What is the general cast of the Bernese Alps? Are they, for example, much indented with valleys?

'The latter form of your question,' answered Mr. Hall, 'is the more manageable, ma'am. The largest continuous mass of ice and snow on the Alps is to the west of the Grimsel and the valley of Hasli. It extends

east and west about thirty miles, north and south nearly twenty. Its area is about six hundred square miles.'

'How this region must affect the atmosphere for miles around! It must be one of the determiners of the nature of the climate,' said William.

'To some extent, no doubt,' said Mr. Hall. 'As to the valleys,' he continued, addressing himself still to Mrs. St. Victor, 'the outer edges of the region I have been speaking of are indented by only three that are inhabitable—at least that are inhabited. One of them opens towards the south into the valley of the Rhone. It is the valley of the Lötsch. The other two we know. They open towards the north into the valley of the Aar.'

'Then we have been up one of them,' said Frank.

'And seen the other,' added Mr. Hall. 'They are the valleys of Grindelwald, and of the Lauterbrunnen. They are the most frequently visited by strangers like ourselves who are simply on tour, and are not in search of any special information for the purposes of science or commerce. They are the easiest and safest approach to the glaciers.'

'The mountains in this region look like so many pyramids rising up from an immense lake of ice,' remarked the observant William.

'True,' said Mr. Hall; 'and the names of two of them are so full of human interest. The Jungfrau, the Virgin. And the Mönch, or Monk. No doubt these names were given because of appearances which the

natural eye of the unsophisticated Bernese observed. But what a world of legends and tales of terror, of virgin sweetness, or monkish holiness or craft, they must have originated, if one had only time to gather them up.'

Mrs. St. Victor had enjoyed this geographical conversation to an extent which argued well for the health both of her body and her spirit. But as she was not prepared to hear a disquisition on legendary lore in general, and Alpine legends in particular, she rose and left the two pupils with their tutor. Mr. Hall betook himself to a cigar.



CHAPTER XXX.

OUR friends took a sail on the other lake. Interlachen, as the word means, stands between two lakes, the Lake of Thun and the Lake of Brientz. They sailed up this latter lake as far as the foot of the Giessbach. It took them an hour to reach this landing-point. And they began to climb the Giessbach by beautiful mountain-paths.

When they landed from the lake, there was something Swiss which was new and very dear to the eyes of Frank. He saw the servants of the hotel in the real national costume. It was the traditionary primitive dress of his country. The body of their dress was of black velvet adorned with trimmings of silver, and the bishop sleeves were of irreproachable whiteness.

Frank and William hurried along a road that had been formed for tourists to get a look at the river. Be-

fore it reaches the Lake of Brientz, where they saw it, this river is dashed over fourteen different falls. Seven of these look as if Nature, the great carver and gilder, had set them in elaborate frames of green and gold.

Nothing could satisfy them now but to mount the Giessbach, as I have said, and visit the cascades one by one. And they anticipated that they would enjoy, as they ascended, views, increasing in splendour, of the lake and the surrounding country, and of all that was fitted to attract the eye, away as far as the pretty little town of Brientz.

Strangers are to be seen going up to these fourteen falls at every hour of the day, and coming down again. Each of the stages has a fine picturesque bridge built over it, from which the view is marvellous in their eyes.

Frank had no difficulty in obtaining Mrs. St. Victor's consent to go up and see the falls, the pools, and the bridges. She was in good spirits that day. She determined to accompany them. The timid, delicate, Parisian lady slightly astonished her friends by her resolution, and its successful accomplishment. The four mounted in single file. Frank was first, William second, Mrs. St. Victor third, and Mr. Hall brought up the rear.

Mrs. St. Victor never seemed to any of her three companions to be so strong as when she had reached the highest cascade. She was quite elated with her success. She sat down on a rock, and looked, with no sign of trepidation, on an immense sheet of water falling over the rock away below her.

Mrs. St. Victor was too much elated with her success. Any exploit would be easy after this, she thought. She forgot that it was more difficult to descend the Alps than to mount them. So she would venture on ways of her own. She did not feel bound to the beaten path. She saw a beautiful winding way, sloping nicely, and softly carpeted with moss. She chose the by-way in preference to the only highway possible in the circumstances. Scarcely had she taken twenty steps before she began to feel insecure, and to fear. Her Alpenstock began to be deceitful. It was not true to its own apparent promise when she dug it into the mossy carpet. Her feet began to slip, then to slide. She fell. She was now slowly on the move to the murderous bottom of a lofty precipice. It was Frank's presence of mind and dauntless courage which averted this calamitous death. Frank had foreseen the danger.

He had hurried down the beaten path to get lower on the hillside than she was. When the danger did appear, he stuck the iron point of his little pole into the trusty bottom of the hole in a rock, and standing thus, himself a little living rock, he let Mrs. St. Victor come down against him at the imminent risk of being driven over the precipice before her. He saved her life at the risk of his own. His father's spirit was in him, but a better fate hovered over him than presided on that dark day of woe above the Schreckhorn. Mrs. St. Victor had lost all consciousness. Several strangers were witnesses to the accident from a natural terrace above. They

hastened to render assistance. They formed their long staves and some reeds into a sort of litter, and got Mrs. St. Victor conveyed to the little Alpine inn.

The most assiduous care was shown the stranger lady who had been so wonderfully saved from a fearful death. But it was very soon perceived that there was no hope of her being able to return to her own hotel for several days. Rest was above all things necessary to keep away some symptoms, and to allay others.

When Mr. Hall was quite convinced that there was no serious danger to fear, he began to allow himself to think and speak. He and William had not understood Frank's rapid motion, and they were not present at the shock. It was as well.

Mr. Hall admired the Giessbach passionately. He said to Mrs. St. Victor, to comfort her as she lay ailing and recovering :—

‘Indeed, ma’am, you are kind in all your actions and accidents. A more delicious place could not have been chosen to give us the privilege of waiting for your recovery.’

Frank and William knew a thing or two hitherto unknown to the learned Mr. Hall. It was all about illuminating the waterfalls. The guides and hotel people can manage this wonderfully. Frank and William had entered into the scheme, and helped to make up the expense along with a few strangers, with whom they had formed an hotel acquaintance.

At nine o'clock the illuminating party, inhabitants

above and below the cascades, invited all the strangers to assemble on the grassy terrace.

The lamps were skilfully placed. They were arranged, of course, to be seen from the place where the travellers had assembled themselves. And soon the cascades looked as if the curtain had been raised from enchanted ground or fairyland. The first lamps on which the eye rested were clear white lights of silvery sheen. Then they became successively red, blue, yellow, and violet. The mountain-side and the lake below seemed to have wonderful lamps from the east dancing upon them. The success was complete, and the enjoyment of all seemed as perfect as that of really happy children.

This spectacle of illumination is a favourite one on the Giessbach. It is kept up during the whole of the tourists' season ; and it is always witnessed by numerous visitors of all ages. For they who arrange it take care to do it when there are plenty of strangers, and to enlist their interest in it.

Mrs. St. Victor was a happy woman during her slight illness from the accident. Frank's conduct seemed to her a vindication of all her conduct towards him. His foresight, on the occasion of the accident, astonished her. She admired his bravery with all a woman's adoration of power. But his goodness and kindness in attending her in her sickness addressed still deeper feelings in her heart. He never seemed to have the least wish to leave her. William proposed a visit to Merlingen.

It was to no purpose. He remained beside his *mother*, and tried to amuse the hours which would otherwise have been lonely.

At the same time this accident caused our travellers some disappointment. It was a privation not to mount to the top of the Brunig. They had intended to avail themselves of this privilege and pleasure. It was to be a walking expedition of course. But Mrs. St. Victor's next journey could be no other way than by carriage.

In the few days predicted she was able to be brought down from the Giessbach, and to go back to her own hotel. There was a diligence going from Interlachen to Alpnach. This town is at the western extremity of the Lake of Lucerne, called also the Lake of the Four Cantons.

It was a beautiful journey, and but for the slight sense of disappointment the enjoyment of the ride would have been perfect up to a certain stage.

It was what might have been expected. A storm varied the monotony of their fine weather. It reminded them that they had no monopoly of the latter. The wind began to rise ; the sky became overcast : the trees looked as if they drooped their proud heads ; the thunder growled ; then the rain came down in a torrent. The horses were blinded, and came to a standstill. The coachman, however, was in no way excited. He was calm, and reassured those under his charge.

‘ It is not the first time I have been in a storm like

this on the Brunig,' he said composedly; 'and I am quite certain it will not be the last.'

Mr. Hall had his hat drawn over his eyes. He so placed himself as to protect Mrs. St. Victor from the wind and rain as much as he could.

It continued more or less stormy all the way to Alpnach. They took the steamer there, and sailed east on the lake for the town of Lucerne. A rainbow appeared immediately, and the tempest on the mountains was soon forgotten.

Sharers in the same pleasures are possessors of similar sympathies. They feel a need of mutual communication of these kindred feelings. A stranger said to Mr. Hall: 'What a splendid lake, sir! Look away down that way to the left! It looks like an inland sea. Where we are is a sort of gulf washing in from the sea. Take my glass. Do you see that rock there. That is the rock upon which William Tell leapt. It is Tell's rock. What lovely lawns these are along the banks! and the hills! and the gardens! and the rows of houses! I think the banks of this lake one of the paradises of earth for a dwelling.'

Mr. Hall did not contradict the enthusiastic stranger. He followed with his eye all the pointings of this voluntary instructor.

Every new aspect of the lake was a fresh topic of conversation to all on board the steamer.

Frank was deeply moved when he saw the Rigi and Mount Pilatus. These mountains recalled many a dream

of his childhood. To climb them had once been the one aspiration of all his nature. Serious changes had happened since then!

'You would have known the tops of them a long time ago, Frank,' said William, 'if you had not been in a way compelled to become a gentleman. I believe you would have been as famous as your father, and more fortunate too.'

Lena's son felt many sensations hitherto unobserved by him in his own heart, when he came in sight of the mountains he had looked up to in childhood, and regarded as great giants stationed there to protect Schwytz and all its inhabitants and interests.

He shut his eyes. He felt as if he were seeing too many things. He thought of his mother. He was in spirit with her in her lonely cottage. Lonely it was, no doubt, but plentifully supplied with everything she needed. He heard the people around him saying that the Rigi was higher than man could climb. Too steep at stages of its height to ascend, they said. Mr. Hall and William regretted this circumstance. Frank Miller had other thoughts. The spirit of the mountains possessed him. Its home was on their highest peaks, and he could no more think these unapproachable than a child could imagine the door of its happy home closed upon it. That is a strange appropriation which the child of the mountains makes when he looks up with trust to their proud and defiant protectiveness. It is akin to the feelings of a child of the ocean. The man

who has been at sea from his childhood shudders at the dangers to which landmen are exposed. A falling chimney-can or a house on fire are the great horrors which scare him in his imaginations of evil. So of the child of the mountains. His imagination does not shape itself into any terror to be charged upon their towering peaks.

‘Was your attention called to Tell’s rock?’ asked Mr. Hall, disturbing Frank in his inspired reverie.

‘Do you think it would be true that he actually leapt on that particular rock?’ asked William, who was standing beside them, before Frank had time to reply.

‘I think it probably was,’ answered Mr. Hall. ‘We, of course, cannot rely on tradition and early chronicle with the same trust as we rely on the aqueous solution of an alkali turning vegetable blue into green, or vegetable yellow into reddish-brown; but we can depend on them with a sense of security enough for all practical purposes. A name like Tell’s is a rich inheritance to a nation. He is a father of many heroes in every generation. No one can estimate his influence in the battles by which Switzerland has secured and vindicated its right to liberty. A dead hero inspires soldiers more surely than a living one. The heroic general or common soldier is limited to one place; but the dead hero is everywhere. He is the same hero, but he is present to every heart, and his example cheers them on to victory. He is to them in some sense as God should be to all of us.’

‘Has Tell’s story been gravely doubted by any historians whose names would give weight to their doubts?’ asked Mrs. St. Victor, who had been listening to Mr. Hall.

‘Oh! yes,’ he replied. ‘Doubts of its historical truth have been suggested by the fact that similar stories are told of patriots in other regions. A Danish king, Harold, and a hero named Toko, are celebrated for a similar feat in the infancy of Denmark. Saxo Grammaticus records their story. It is also found in the *Wilkins Saga*. The story is told also of a William Tell in Switzerland of the twelfth century. A count of Seedorf, who had extensive possessions in the canton of Uri, is also accredited with a similar feat of skill and daring. Another circumstance, which is seized upon by those who would invalidate the historical force of this hero’s great work, is that in the documents relating to ancient Swiss confederacies, and published in 1835, there is no reference to any bailiff residing in the castle of Küssnacht who was named Gessler. Grimm and Ideler, therefore, consider the whole story of Tell as a myth.’

‘Do you not think that they have powerful reasons for their doubts?’ asked Mrs. St. Victor.

‘There are other considerations,’ was the scholar’s reply. ‘They supply at least a groundwork of fact. Pilgrimages began to be made to the spot where Tell is said to have made his escape from the boat, soon after the reputed date of his death. In fact, processions were then established. And there is the celebrated chapel of

Tell near the spot. It was built by the canton of Uri so early as 1388 ; and it is recorded that a hundred and fourteen of the visitors to the chapel in that year had been personally acquainted with the hero. These circumstances, and the harmony of all the early chroniclers who wrote his story at a period closely subsequent to his own, incline me to accept the central facts, at all events, as historical truths, to be relied on and reasoned from.'

'You have referred to dates two or three times, sir,' said William Verny. 'I am not at all familiar with the historical facts you accept as true. Would you kindly supply me with them, and the dates, if you can remember them?'

'I wonder at the capacity of your memory,' said Mrs. St. Victor. 'I could never make anything of dates ; but indeed I never was fond of history as a study.'

This was a piece of gratuitous information to Mr. Hall. He knew that Mrs. St. Victor had never made much of any study beyond certain ways of the world which he held in unpronounceable disregard. He knew also that, without an accurate knowledge of dates, there was but a slovenly acquaintance with history. So he answered William's question gladly thus :—

'William Tell was of the canton of Uri. He was a simple countryman. He belonged to the village of Bürglen near Altdorf, and he lived towards the end of the thirteenth and during the first half of the fourteenth century. He owes his immortality to the tyranny of the Austrians. The three cantons, Uri, Schwytz, and

Unterwalden, were a trouble to Albert I. of Austria. He tried all that craft, cruelty, or power could dare or do to suppress their independence, and add them to his family estates. The bailiffs he sent down to rule these three cantons were all flagitious tyrants. They treated the people like a conquered nation. In 1307 the three cantons formed a league. Walter Fürst, Arnold von Melchthal, and Werner Stauffacher, were the chief men of the league. Tell was Walter Fürst's son-in-law, and he was a member of the league. It was a compact of caution and biding their time to deliver their country from its oppressors, without bloodshed if possible.

'The confederates had gained considerable strength when Hermann Gessler of Brunnegg, who, as one of the bailiffs of Albert I., was resident in the canton of Uri, took it into his head, in addition to all the other vexations of his cruel tyranny, to raise a pole in the marketplace of Altdorf, and, putting the ducal hat of Austria upon it, to compel every one who passed to uncover his head, as a mark of respect, and even of loyalty, to the house of Austria.

'William Tell and his little boy passed one day, and took no notice of the pole. He was at once taken before Gessler. The tyrant had heard of Tell's bowmanship. He ordered Tell to shoot an apple from his own child's head from a considerable distance, and added, that if he missed the apple, he would be put to death. He did not miss it. Tell secured two arrows without being observed.

The tyrant had expected that he would kill his child, and was disappointed that he did not. As a pretext for venting his wrath, he challenged the bowman for having a second arrow in his possession. "It was intended for thee, if the first had hit my child," was Tell's defiant reply to his angry question. The bailiff ordered Tell to be bound in a boat and conveyed across this lake to the castle of Küssnacht, his own residence, and he accompanied the prisoner. A violent storm arose. The rowers could not manage the boat. Tell was freed from his fetters to assist them. He was a skilful boatman. He knew every nook of the lake. He took the rudder, and steered towards the jutting flat shelf, since called Tell's rock. He seized his bow, jumped on the rock, pushed off the boat with his heel, and escaped. Tradition adds that Gessler got safe to land, and that Tell lay in wait for him in a narrow defile, and shot him through the heart. This is said to have happened towards the close of 1307.'

All the three auditors of Mr. Hall listened with the deepest attention. William, however, was curious in one point :—

'What kind of bow did Tell use? Was it the long-bow or the cross-bow?' he asked.

'Oh! the cross-bow certainly,' answered Mr. Hall.

'Was Tell immediately recognised as a hero by his country?' asked Mrs. St. Victor.

'Not at all; such a thing never happens. We do not know much of how he was regarded. But there are hints

in the chronicles of deep disapproval of his act in slaying Gessler, because it was an article of their compact to avoid bloodshed as much as possible.'

'Then he did not rise to any eminence in his country's councils of war or of peace?' was further pressed by Mrs. St. Victor.

'After his great adventure, Tell sinks again altogether out of sight. He is said to have fought in the battle of Morgarten, and the tradition of his death is, that he was drowned in the river Schächen during a great flood in the year 1350. The great hero of Scotland, Sir William Wallace, was executed in London in the year 1305, two years before William Tell's heroic adventure. So that they were national heroes of the same period. At least, the two men breathed the air of this earth at the same time in some of the years of their life. Wallace's glorious career, however, was run before Tell's began.'

Frank had been all the time silent, but he drank in every word which his beloved tutor uttered.



CHAPTER XXXI.

LENA had lived in her own little old cottage for eight years after the new one was ready for her. The new one had stood empty all this time. It was not built to let: it was built for Lena; and if it could not have been enjoyed by her or hers, Mrs. St. Victor would have allowed her agent, the solemn man, to consider it a gift to himself.

The idea that she was being separated from Frank induced Lena to cling to the old cottage. It was in it he had been born; and in clinging to it, the mother thought that thus she still retained something of her only son.

But now when Frank was coming home, it was a very different affair. She had no objection to take possession of the new cottage in the altered prospect for the future. Indeed, it would be quite necessary. Frank could never live in the little old house; there would not be room for his books.

Lena knew both from her memorable conversation with Mrs. St. Victor, and by letters from Frank, that he was coming home this autumn. She counted the days

of summer, and wished they were not so long. She trembled at the thought that, after all, he might not come; and as the time for the brightness of her realized hopes drew near, her fears often drove her almost to despair.

A month before the time she had any reason to expect his arrival, Lena was fully established in her new and beautiful house. The neighbours knew that she might have been in it eight years ago, and so they had no word of envy to utter. Lena showed no senseless pride. They helped her to remove. They looked in upon her with kindly interest. They saw her dusting, arranging the furniture, and laying in provisions, and they thought it was all as it ought to be. Lena's joy was so great sometimes, that even the new house had not room to hold it. There was another feeling which helped to produce the kind of choking sensation which the simple Lena occasionally felt. It was the secret. It was a trouble to her. She needed to speak out about it and her joy; so she went into the fields, and talked aloud to herself.

One day she received a letter from Frank, in which he announced his speedy arrival. She could not contain herself. She walked away out into the country till she came near a cottage. She was saying to herself:—

‘Oh! I should fear this happiness if I did not know that it was coming from heaven. Frank's heart has never been from home. It has always been the same to me. And how I have loved him! I feel now as if

I were going to have a lord and master to look up to and obey. I shall pursue my own household duties. He will read in his books. He will be a man who can talk about histories of the whole world. He will write to his friends. He will walk with his hands behind his back, and not say a word to anybody, just as the school-master does sometimes ! Frank will be a good man as he has been a good boy.'

There is no saying how far Lena might have flown in her lowly aspirations, but for a stirring she heard in the cottage as she was passing it. She looked in at a window, and saw Stephen, the shepherd boy, rubbing his eyes to rouse himself from a sleep.

Lena. Sleepy, Stephen ?

Stephen. The sheep are so troublesome, I wish I had the goats again. I was so tired.

Lena. And you slept ?

Stephen. No ; I dreamed.

Lena. Dreamed, and did not sleep !

Stephen. I was dreaming about flowers and wreaths. I thought I saw lights like those they say are up the Giessbach. The court of the *Golden Lion* was filled with carriages. The bells were ringing just as they do for a baptism ; and I saw you with your velvet jacket, and you had on a gay bonnet, not the black one. And Frank was going away up the Hacken. Some of us were shooting little cannons, and others were pelting Frank with sugar-plums.

Lena. It has been a wonderful dream, Stephen ; but if

you tell any other body about it, you can leave out Frank and me.

Stephen. But I won't.

Lena. Tell about the sugar-plums.

Stephen. And the shooting, and the bells, and the lamps, and the carriages, and Frank. Dreams are dreams, and they are sometimes something more.

Lena. Are you going up the hill?

Stephen. No ; I am going to Schwytz with the cheese.

Lena expected that Stephen would tell his dream to the sheep. It would have been like him. He was an ardent, imaginative, kind-hearted boy. There are many such in Switzerland. But he told it to the shepherds this time, and not to the sheep. He told it also to lots of his friends in Schwytz ; indeed, to as many of them as had two minutes' time to listen to him.

Everybody liked Frank. His last visit had settled all doubts in his favour ; and it was known that he was coming home soon. Lena made no concealment of that, as it was no part of the great secret.

Stephen's dream struck a chord. Frank would be received with public honours. They might not get the bells rung ; but they could shout, and they would, when they saw him.

The day came round ; that happy day ! Lena was as much astonished as anybody at all the stir that was in the streets. Wreaths and crowns had been wrought in secret. She was not to be let into the ploy. They were hung out the day Frank was to arrive. All

windows and doors were adorned with them. The bells did not ring. It could not be expected. But Frank's old friends and everybody else did shout. There were no lamps like those on the Giessbach ; but the sun shone bright on Schwytz that day. Lena began to think Stephen a young prophet, a modern boy Samuel. She remembered that Stephen said Frank was to mount the Hacken ; but this was not likely in the circumstances. This was one more discrepancy. But, on the other hand, there was the shooting and the sugar-plums. This was all very wonderful to Lena ; but a thought darted into her mind which appalled her. What if Mrs. St. Victor should think that she had let out the secret ? Indeed, how could she otherwise regard all this demonstration ? Lena knew she had kept the secret, and the demonstration was no fault of hers.

Frank ran up to his friends to speak to them, while Mr. Hall was doing the polite thing to Mrs. St. Victor, in the way of showing her out of the carriage into the cottage. A more conceited boy than Frank would have insisted on making a show of this privilege. Lena was slightly tremulous for fear Mrs. St. Victor would ask what all this fuss and folly meant ; but she didn't, of course. Mrs. St. Victor's heart was glad, and her soul was humble and thankful before God. She felt as if some good had resulted from her weakness.

Frank's heart responded to the affection of his early friends in receiving him as they did. He was proud of the manly looks of many of them.

Another thing pleased Frank. It was, that his mother had got into her new house. He was not ashamed of the cottage of his birth ; but he feared Mrs. St. Victor might have felt slighted if she found her kindness still refused. And, the truth to tell, there would have been no room in the old house for the four of them, besides his mother.

They were all settled and comfortable. Mrs. St. Victor astonished them as much by her adaptation to humble life as she had made them wonder at the vigour with which she ascended to the falls of the Giessbach. But she was rather silent ; and no wonder. A work of God was before her eyes, a great work ; and she had been the unwise, unworthy instrument.

Lena received Mr. Hall like an old friend, and was glad to see William.

She did her best to make them all comfortable. She watched all Mrs. St. Victor's movements. What with concern about whether Mrs. St. Victor would be satisfied that she had kept the secret ; what with her anxiety about having so many important people in the house ; what with the longing of her heart that Mrs. St. Victor, or Frank, or somebody, would say the word which would confirm her hopes, Lena's heart was rather kept on edge for a time.

The evening of the day after their arrival, Mrs. St. Victor said to Frank—' I should like to take one of our old walks to-morrow morning, Frank. It will be the first of the sort we have had by ourselves for eight years.'

'And I shall make you up a bouquet of the little wild-flowers you used to be so fond of,' was Frank's assent.

'At seven I shall be ready,' said Mrs. St. Victor.

'At seven,' responded Frank. He said this without for a moment reflecting that in Paris Mrs. St. Victor never got up before ten o'clock. It was one of these things he took for granted. It was an inspiration of faith in the bracing air of his native land.

Nor was Frank surprised next morning to find her ready. It was only what was to be expected from the air she was breathing.

They set off for their old walk after so many eventful years! More in number than the rounds of the sun since then, they were to be measured by revolutions in the hearts of those two whom Lena was looking after.

Lena stood for a long time at the door following them with her eyes. She left the door, and ceased following them with her eyes, only to lift her heart up to God and the place where she knew Frank's father dwelt.

Mr. Hall and William lay rather long that morning. The rays of the sun shining in through the shutter seemed to Mr. Hall to be laughing at him rather than smiling that morning. He ascribed it to his own laziness.

They both dressed and slipped out, in the hope that they might at least have the credit of having taken a walk before breakfast. This would save appearances.

They went, and knew they would be back again in ample time.

Mr. Hall took this sleeping too long more to heart than many people would think at all necessary. Every profession has a tendency to breed peculiarities of character in the men who devote themselves to it. A teacher always finds it difficult to be off his guard in the presence of boys. If he is conscientious, he is anxious to show in his own life and habits the good results of the knowledge he communicates. The best result of knowledge is a growth of wisdom. And one of the habits of wisdom is to avoid all appearance of sloth. Now Mr. Hall had a strong word to say against all that made a man a sluggard. And he could not say to himself that he had not been sluggish this morning. Nor could he keep his tongue off the subject when he was walking out with William. He began by trying to insinuate a denial of the evidence of the clock and his own watch.

'It is not so late, is it?' he said with some confusion of look.

'It is after nine,' said William; 'but I don't look upon that as being late when we have nothing to do.'

'Nothing to do!' exclaimed Mr. Hall, and he looked as if he were going to set off at a canter in a lecture to William on the duty of always having something to do. But William, not sharing Mr. Hall's feelings about the enormity of an extra hour's enjoyment of his bed during the holidays, was not going to be called to account. So

he took the simplest way of settling the question by putting another—

‘What have we to do?’ he asked.

This was more than Mr. Hall could tell. The truth was that the excellent man thought he had done something unworthy of himself in being caught napping too long.

The two hurried along as if they had really something to do. But William suggesting that they might take a walk through the town, Mr. Hall at once consented. He stood, however, for a moment to adjust his ideas regarding the relations of the town to the hills and valleys around. He said to William—

‘This is the valley of Muotta. You will observe that Schwytz stands at the junction of this valley with that one, and that one.’

‘The one southwards is to Brunnen, is it not, sir?’ said William.

‘Yes. And the one westwards is towards the little lake Lowertz,’ answered Mr. Hall.

‘I should say Brunnen is not four miles distant,’ remarked William.

‘About three,’ said Mr. Hall.

William and Mr. Hall took a walk over a good part of the town. There are no ancient walls at Schwytz. It has two good streets. There is a large square. And the church is a very handsome one, notwithstanding Dolly White’s protest that it would not hold five hundred people.

‘To whom is it dedicated?’ William asked.

‘To St. Martin,’ answered Mr. Hall, whose knowledge seemed to be aware of no bounds, and who had considerably recovered his self-respect, now that he felt in his heart that William could not regard him as the same sort of sluggard as other men who lie too long in the morning.

‘What building is this?’

‘I believe it is the Jesuits’ college. I know they have one in this town.’

But Mr. Hall was not quite so sure in this answer to William’s question. So he selected an intelligent-looking man to ask. Mr. Hall felt that it was as well he had done so, for the Schwytzer told them as much in five minutes as he would have taken hours to hunt up.

He confirmed Mr. Hall’s guess as to the building William had asked about. He pointed out to them the convents, the town-hall, the register house or repository of archives, an hospital which is used also as a prison, a public library, which he informed them is rich in works of historical interest, especially as regards Switzerland. He mentioned the famous cabinet of medals which belongs to one of the old families. And he took them into the burying-ground to point out the monument raised to the honour of Aloys Reding, who fought so bravely against the French, and for the independence of his country, in 1798-99. He mentioned that the Reding family was one of the most honoured in Schwytz. They had quite an historical reputation. This Aloys was

not the only member of it who had done signal service to his country, either in the field of battle, or in the councils of state.

Mr. Hall was deeply interested. It never occurred to him at the time that he himself was a Frenchman. Mr. Hall was too much of a man to be only a Frenchman. In Mr. Hall's esteem, every prefix to the word man, was a subtraction from its value. To him a man was something nobler than a gentleman. And in the presence of the monument raised to a Swiss patriot, he was as warm and hearty as any Swiss in all the country could be.

This ramble over the town quite restored Mr. Hall's equanimity.



CHAPTER XXXII.

MRS. ST. VICTOR and Frank took a long walk that morning. They talked about everything, but did not say much. One may speak. It takes two to talk. So there has to be a second, or a thing cannot be said. To say is to cause to see. Thus saith the Lord is a true light which shineth. The agent says. The object sees. But there is no such relationship of reception and dependence in talking; although talking, like saying, differs from speaking in as far as those both require two.

There was much talk and nothing said for a long time between Mrs. St. Victor and Frank that morning.

They directed their walk up the mountain side. They arrived at a miniature table-land where some wild-flowers grew, of which Mrs. St. Victor had formerly

shown great fondness. The mighty mountains saluted the morning sun. These great ones of the earth seemed courtly and at their princely ease in the presence of the glare of awful majesty from the monarch on his chariot-throne. The cottages were beads worked into the network of the meadows. The lake was calm and glad. The hay-makers were the only living things that were seen to move on any part of the scene.

‘Isn’t it beautiful!’ said Frank, giving a voice to Mrs. St. Victor’s looks.

‘It is indeed,’ was what her eyes had been saying for some time.

The two souls were now one in this perception of beauty. All common sympathy unifies. It is communion. And it may change its object, but still it is one. When love bears universal sway, all who can feel it will be one.

The two souls in one looked away through the grandeur before their eyes back into the years. Mrs. St. Victor said :—

‘It is eight years since I visited this beautiful country before. I was desolate. I was in search of rest. I had tried wealth and society, but had failed. I thought when I came here to find happiness in the beauties of nature. I asked, but did not receive ; because I asked amiss. I began to think that I had been forsaken for ever, and that the last smile from heaven I was to receive on earth had been from my sweet little baby in his cradle. You came that night, and you seemed to

care only for your lamb. I was strangely moved by your voice. I loved you at the first sound of it. I resolved to secure you for myself. To make you my son,—my heir. Your mother resisted my wish. I worked upon her fears. She had lived in constant dread of your growing up to become a guide, and following the career of your father, even to its awful end. You know the rest. I have not been able to tear you from your mother's heart. I have failed to enshrine you all in only mine. Your tears and temper in childhood warned me off from the vain attempt. I did not heed the warning. I thought time would make you more teachable and tractable. I did not reflect that that meant less dutiful. I had gained a diversion from my gloom. But I had not attained unto rest. Mr. Hall's influence over you has not been what I calculated upon. It has been better than I at first wished. Your successes at school and college began to alter the current of my thoughts. You have grown up as much without reproach as you have always been without fear. But I have lately begun to be possessed of other thoughts about you. They are fears, indeed. I fear the results of some of my own efforts. I fear lest you should become frivolous, idle, and less worthy of your father. This thought has burdened me much. It haunts me. It speaks truth to me. My own heart has been saying many things to me in secret. They all mean : render his mother her own. I have come here to obey its voice. Frank, I restore you to your mother, and to your father's country.'



You used to like these best.—Page 274.

This is what Mrs. St. Victor said, and Frank saw it all. He looked straight into his adoptive mother's earnest eyes, all the time she was speaking. Many thoughts hovered over his heart. He knelt down to look for a flower. After selecting one kind with care, he said holding it up to her, who had never before looked so beautiful—

‘You used to like these best.’

Frank rose up again. He had no questions to ask. He felt that all he had heard was truth. And all truth was sacred to Frank. Mrs. St. Victor, however, saw one ray beaming in his eyes, and she addressed it thus :—

‘Oh no ! It has been different. You have been my benefactor. I have been instructed and taught by you.’

It was the ray of gratitude, deep immortal gratitude, in Frank's soul to which these words were spoken. It was then Frank felt that he had something to say in turn, and his tears flowed freely as a prelude.

‘I owe everything to you, mother,’ was what Frank had to say.

‘You have dispelled the illusions which shut out the light of truth and the love of duty from my heart,’ was Mrs. St. Victor's answer, following up her former strain. ‘I sought happiness above or beyond the sphere in which Providence had appointed me to find it. I have been mercifully taught.’

‘And I too,’ said Frank. ‘May I say that the same God has been kind to my dearest mother and to me ?’

'I think you will be better in the country,' was a lowering of the tone of emotion, but a remark as much to the point as anything Mrs. St. Victor had thus far said.

'I have wished it,' replied Frank. 'But I do not know how I shall like it, if I am to be far separated from you. I feel now how much I am going to lose. And oh! I do regret how often I have grieved you.'

'You have never grieved me, my darling boy,' answered Mrs. St. Victor, and she certainly felt how much she was sacrificing.

But Mrs. St. Victor had other thoughts, and she added—

'I intend to buy an estate in this canton, if I can find one suitable. I shall spend a portion of every year at it. This will secure that I see you often. And your assistance in the management of it will be of great use to me.'

All restraint was removed now. At this announcement, Frank broke down entirely. His mother would never leave him. He tenderly kissed her lovely lips. Mrs. St. Victor felt a peace of God, and her soul was for a time at perfect rest.

This conversation lasted more than an hour. Lena was looking anxiously in the direction in which she expected they would return.

Mrs. St. Victor and Frank came up, and it would not have been easy to guess at the amount of emotion which had stirred the heart of either. Mrs. St. Victor stood at

the door as Frank went in, and she said to Lena in a sort of off-hand way—

‘I have been saying to Frank something the same as I said to you, Lena.’

She did not say when she had said it. But Lena knew. The burden of the secret rolled off from her heart that moment. It had sat like a day and night-mare on that open heart for twelve long months. But other thoughts flocked in upon Lena’s mind. She would not have been a human mother in her condition if they had not. They were all summed up in the sentence—

‘Frank is rich!’ She then ejaculated, ‘Oh, God, may he be good.’

Mrs. St. Victor had passed into her room to make ready for breakfast.

It was just then that Mr. Hall and William came in from their ramble, taken for the sake of appearances. They were in better time than they had calculated upon. Their arrival was a most needful diversion. It prevented any approach to a scene. Lena made a remark on their long lie that morning. Mrs. St. Victor came out of her room, and rallied them both on their sluggishness. Good Mr. Hall answered the raillery as well as he could. William had nothing to say. And Lena and Mrs. St. Victor had it all their own way.

Mr. Hall was little aware of how much was hid under all those merry laughs. If he had had any idea of it, he would have begun to analyse the laughs, and perhaps he would have thought that he had succeeded.

All the inhabitants of Schwytz rejoiced in Lena's joy. They were proud of Frank. The older inhabitants thought of the unhappy end of his father. And the story of Rufiberg and Goldau, and Frank's grandfather's trumpet-tones of warning were told over again at many a fireside far and near.

'Was that the secret?' asked Dolly, when Lena told her all about how matters were arranged. 'Well, you cannot say that I plagued you too much about it. You were right. It was best not to tell.'

'But I made too much of it after all,' answered Lena. 'The lady has never asked me if I told anybody.'

Mrs. St. Victor lived henceforth a life entirely new. She and Frank traversed the canton for an estate to sell. She bought a property, beautiful in itself, and in its situation about six miles from Schwytz.

Mrs. St. Victor had to return to Paris in the meantime. And, of course, so had Mr. Hall and William. After tender farewells with Frank and Lena, and Dolly too, they left, knowing it was not by any means for ever, for Mrs. St. Victor would be sure to come early in the summer. And Mr. Hall said he would come next holidays, and bring Mrs. Hall and all the children. And William was made to promise that he would come often. Frank hinted that he might be needed by and bye to consult about the house on Mrs. St. Victor's new estate. The present one was not so good. It might need repairs or replacement.

‘Lena,’ said Dolly, the day after they all left, ‘it is wonderful.’

‘Wonderful,’ responded Lena.

‘It is so like a story,’ began Dolly again, ‘and yet we have none of the kind of feelings which I always think the people in stories have.’

‘What kind of feelings do you think they have?’ asked Lena, who had really no remark to make.

‘Well, I always think the people in stories know a great deal more about their own feelings than we do. They can always tell who is going to do anything. And they are so near to each other’s hearts. Now this lady has done a great deal for Frank. But these have been eight long years, Lena. And the people in the stories would have had some way of making them shorter. And yet, it is so like a story.’ Such were some of Dolly’s feelings after some grasp of the fine old and ever new contrast between life and art.

‘But I have had a great deal to make me comfortable too,’ said Lena, ‘if I had only known.’

‘Only known!’ exclaimed Dolly. ‘That’s what makes the difference. The people in the stories always know. And they wait with such patience for what is as sure to come round as washing-day. But just to think of that time you so nearly died, because you had got yourself convinced that Frank was as good as dead to you. Now, could that lady not have told you at the time that she intended to come in this pleasant way, and give you back your own son, after making him as

fine and as rich as if she had borne the labour of giving him birth ?

‘Perhaps she did not know herself,’ replied Lena, who had an instinct of the real state of the matter.

‘Oh ! she must have known,’ insisted Dolly.

‘I don’t know that,’ answered Lena. ‘I like better to think that she was in the hands of Him to whom my husband intrusted me and his boy when he set out on that journey that was to be his last here. The Husband to the widow, and the Father of the fatherless has taken a kindly care of Frank and me. And I am sure it is for the sake of him that’s gone.’





CHAPTER XXXIII.

ALL my readers will wish to know something about Frank Miller's future. His future has not run far since the time referred to at the close of last chapter ; but I can add a detail or two.

Frank's taste for study increased after he settled at home. But he did not become a book-worm. He could still write Latin verses when they were needed, but that was not often. He set himself to that very necessary study which his mother had hinted at in the conversation with Mrs. St. Victor. He became a most skilful farmer. He managed Mrs. St. Victor's estates admirably, and made the best and most of those he had purchased for himself.

Frank built an addition to the house which Mrs. St. Victor had ordered to be erected for his mother. He had a beautiful study and a cabinet of curiosities, both of

which looked out towards the Lowertz. He passed many a happy hour in these rooms. And when he came out he looked in Lena's eyes even more like a wise and learned man than the schoolmaster. And in Dolly's eyes too.

Dolly's prediction was fulfilled in one respect. Frank was soon elected Landmann of the canton of Schwytz. And he gave money to the clergyman for the poor, just as he used to dream himself.

William became an architect, and prospered. The fine house in which Mrs. St. Victor spends her summers is one of William's earliest undertakings. And only a clever architect could have designed it.

Luke had wandered far since he and Catherine disputed about letting Frank in that night. But he never saw any one he liked better, and he married her and took her to a better house than Lena's little cot.

Claude was able to go home to Savoy and get his sister married to big Brown. He started a farm. Both Mrs. St. Victor and Frank helped him in this. Claude is sure to succeed. He gave up all thoughts of becoming a dancing-master, but he went home and often made the Savoyards stare at the clever things he could do in the way of dancing.

The Halls have spent every holiday since partly with Frank and partly with Mrs. St. Victor. But it is nearly all the same thing.

Lena is now one of the happiest of mothers. And Frank gives her no uneasiness on the score of leaving her soon.

Mrs. St. Victor has ceased the vain pursuit of impossible pleasures. She was brought back to herself by means of Frank Miller. She is selfish no more. She wearies no more. The poor at her gates bless her.

Miss Cadny is a constant visitor on the new estate. She and Mrs. St. Victor are now more of one heart. They both admire and love Frank Miller.

Frank has travelled much over all Switzerland. He knows its heights and bye-ways well. But he does not travel for the pleasure merely of visiting these. Frank is an able agriculturist. He is zealous for improvements in Swiss farming. Already he has done more for his canton than any president within easy memory. He is also a judge as well as a counsellor. He will, no doubt, in due time, assist in the councils of the nation, as Dolly has also predicted.

Frank Miller's brave countrymen admire him. They love his mother. They respect Mrs. St. Victor. And they revere the memory of his father and grandfather, the guide and the sole survivor of Goldau.



